

# Editorial

*He (Mr. Watkinson) questioned whether the Opposition's Censure motion was on the Government or on the whole NATO Alliance. He and the Government believed the NATO Alliance was and must remain the core to our defence strategy.*

*If he were to accept the provisions of the motion and some of the arguments put forward by Opposition members, he would have to go to the Defence Minister's meeting and propose a complete reversal of present NATO policy—(Opposition cries of "Why not?")—"The consequence would be that I should have done the maximum to weaken the Alliance."*

(Guardian report of the Debate on Nuclear Weapons for West Germany. 12/2/60).

IT IS only when we think of the terrible sub-industrial wastes along the stretch of road between Reading and Slough that we have any misgivings whatever about the Third Aldermaston March. In our more sober moments, everything that has happened in the field of nuclear diplomacy during the last three months confirms the need for a greater demonstration of opposition to the nuclear 'scatter' than last year's 15,000. If anything, the politics of the Bomb have taken a distinct turn for the worse. Driven by the logic of their own position, the NATO powers are now lolling in the itchy palm of Dr. Adenauer. The only question now is whether German nuclear weapons are to be developed independently by Germany, or be supplied and 'controlled' by NATO through the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. If these are indeed the real alternatives, there is something to be said (at last) for NATO! Dr. Adenauer is now the supreme controller of the European heartland: and until the United States have completed their crash programme for nuclear armed and powered submarines, the heartland holds sway. Adenauer has successfully dictated the pace of the West's unwilling creep to the Summit, vetted and pruned the Agenda, kept Berlin hanging over the Head of Whitehall and Washington whenever it seemed that peace might be in the air. Never has the recovery of a defeated power been so rapid or so disastrous.

In the meanwhile, Napoleon IV has touched off his ludicrous nuclear device, scattering the radio-active particles of the Sahara to the four corners of the African continent. "France", he reports, "is both powerful and proud". The French Test, dictated by the logic of the arms race but symptomatic more of the Rottenness of France than of her Grandeur, must be one of the greatest—and perhaps one of the last—obscenities practised by a European power against the continent of Africa. When the history books are written in Accra and Nairobi, General De Gaulle will

## "Why Not?"

be remembered as one of the Great Europeans who brought the terrors of science to Africa when what that continent needed most were its benefits.

There is now neither non-Nuclear Club nor balance of terror. There is no one left to belong to Mr. Gaitskell's Club: as a consequence, Labour is without anything which looks remotely like a Defence Policy. Thus, both Mr. George Brown, who believes that NATO is not working fast enough and Jennie Lee, armed with an official West German map showing Dr. Adenauer's land-lust for territory which is now Polish, spoke in the name of the Labour Movement. It is all very well for the Opposition to make a moral show of force against nuclear weapons for Germany: it is just a bit late. As Mr. Watkinson pointed out, the arming of West Germany is an essential piece in the NATO jig-saw: to argue against that is to argue against NATO, the policy of nuclear deterrence and the whole strategy of the Alliance. There is no sign that Labour's Front Bench, constantly employed in devising confidential defence papers for the North Atlantic Community, are moving towards this threshold of realism: it is part of the job of the Campaign, thrashing about in deep political waters but refusing to swim, to point again and again to the sense in the back-bench cries: "Why Not?"

The French Bomb, in its clumsy turn, destroyed the famous "balance of terror" which has reigned ever since Britain entered the nuclear lists. The stalemate is at an end: we have entered another spiral in the nuclear build-up. It is now the turn of the Eastern bloc. Has anyone stopped to think what the world will be like when China and the Ulbricht régime in East Germany receive tactical and strategic nuclear devices?

These are the real moving forces in nuclear politics today. In that event, it is unrealistic to believe that the Summit, when finally it takes place, will do anything but dash the hopes of disarmament and throw a ban on nuclear tests out of the window. The Summit is not a magical enchanted garden, where Dr. Adenauer and General De Gaulle are transformed into peaceful fauns. It is a bleak, exposed place, open to the foul exhaust from competing nuclear machines set in high gear; a place where the disillusion of the Geneva Discussions will be distilled; every exit is labelled 'Berlin'. If the Summit meeting is the tragic failure it gives every sign of being, we can expect a renewal of tests in 1961, a rapid development of nuclear submarine strategy (Britain is to have her 'very own' second Polaris shortly) and a serious deterioration of the situation, including perhaps another piece of Soviet brinkmanship over the status of Berlin. Compared with this prospect, the Slough-London road looks positively inviting.

# Crosland Territory

Stuart Hall

A political introduction to the series of articles on *What's Wrong With Capitalism*, linking the theoretical arguments to the current political debate in the Labour Party.

THERE ARE one or two aspects of the current struggle for the soul of the Labour Party which have, so far, gone unremarked. The first—and most important—is the scope of the ‘Crosland Revolution’. Few of us imagined, when Mr. Crosland began to construct his house of theory in *The Future Of Socialism*, that he would become the architect of the Party in the sixties. We have continued to think and speak of the reforming, ‘rethinking’, revising wing of the Party as a rough-and-ready caucus of practical empiricists.

Far from it. Naturally, a good many Party men have been pushed into the Crosland embrace by circumstances—the successive defeats, the deadlocked debates, the unpopular policies, the falling membership, the absence of that god in the electoral machine—the swing. Nevertheless, what they have taken on to cover the nakedness of their position, are the outer garments—at any rate—of an ‘ideology’. Mr. Crosland’s picture of capitalism and the world has behind it the pressure of an informing vision: it provides the right wing of the Party with a framework for the facts, a logical structure enabling them to explain the past and predict the future.

What we have been witnessing in recent weeks is the tail-end of that revolution. The ideological battles have long since been joined and won: first Mr. Gaitskell assented, and then, one after another, the up-and-coming intellectuals in the leadership—Mr. Healey, Mr. Gordon Walker, Mr. Roy Jenkins. By the time that *Industry And Society* appeared at Brighton, in 1957, the picture of reformed capitalism, the managerial revolution and applied Keynesian economics which Mr. Crosland described had already begun to be etched across the face of official policy. Mr. Crosland may not himself have recommended or approved the share-buying scheme: but this—and other proposals of this kind—followed on naturally from his analysis. The recent notes for Political Education Officers in the Constituency Parties affirms that capitalism has been so reformed that it deserves to be called, not capitalism, but Statism—a direct quote from Chapter and Verse in *The Future Of Socialism*. What is most important is that it was the force of this ideology which sustained Mr. Gaitskell’s hands at the Blackpool Conference. Only the final stages of the campaign remain: to isolate the Left as a fundamentalist rump (what *The Economist* refers to as the Victorian Marxists in the Constituency parties), to popularise the more difficult Crosland concepts and to fight them through into the Party, drawing the Trade Unions into place behind them

(a difficult one, this, for ‘nationalisation’ is the last of the TU shibboleths) and remaking the Party from within. The ‘image’ will follow, and after that—hopefully—victory. In this difficult task, Mr. Gaitskell commands the active and continuous (if surprising) support not only of Party moderates, but also of the centre heavy-weights of the press: *The Guardian*, *The Observer*, *The Spectator* and *The Economist*.

What are the essential elements of this new ideology? For a summary of Mr. Crosland’s theses, applied to the moving arena of politics, one cannot do better than look over Mr. Gaitskell’s Blackpool speech. The analysis began with the social backdrop to Labour’s defeat—the changing character of the Labour force. Next he gathered up in one sweep the current myths about capitalism, lending them the force of his moderate personality: how it had been tamed from without (the Labour Government reforms) and changed from within (the managers replacing the ravening capitalists of earlier eras). Then finally, he gestured towards prosperity—the Welfare State, the “comforts, pleasures and conveniences of the home”.

“In short”, he summed up, “the changing character of labour, full employment, new housing, the new way of living based on the telly, the frig., and the car, and the glossy magazines—all these have had their effect on our political strength.”

In the ‘American’ age just in front of us, when reformed capitalism will flush out the remnants of earlier squalor (a point not dwelt on), Mr. Gaitskell could see little for Labour to do, if it desired to rule once more, but follow in the path of the upturns in our economic life. (Someday, he could be heard singing in an exclusive interview with *The Observer* the following week, “the swing will come”). The future of the Party, then, he cast in this soft mould: defence of the underdog (not a comforting prospect, this, since he had already implied that capitalism would take care of him too, in the next round of prosperity): “social justice” “an equitable distribution of wealth and income”; a “classless society” (surely a misfit, this one). Finally, (a concession to the young Liberals, who picketed the Conference with a fresh-faced delight?)—“equality of the races”, a belief in “spiritual” values (a heightening sentiment in the age of the glossy magazine) and the freedom of the individual.

This case is tougher than it looks on paper. It has, behind it, the force of circumstances (post-war prosperity); beneath it, the support of serious intellectual

analysis (the managerial revolution and Keynesian economics); and before it, the lure of political office (the third Tory victory). What is more, it is firmly rooted—or appears to be so—in contemporary ‘facts’. In this sense, the analysis is certainly more alive to the realities of society today than the defence which the Left mustered in reply. The composition of the labour force *has* changed: there *are* “fewer farm-workers, more shop assistants, fewer miners, more engineers”, and these facts are bound to have an effect upon the attitudes, aspirations and expectations of working people. The fact that this change is so uneven through the country—the newer technological industries advancing, leaving the older factories as great gaping social and economic sores—simply masks and confuses this transformation. Mr. Gaitskell may be altogether wrong in his analysis of what working people *want*—of why, for example, they should always and by definition want a new car more than they want a better education for their children: but it does not help to assert that nothing is new under the sun.

## Errors and Abuses

The errors in the argument fall into two categories. In the first place, the analysis of capitalism and its trends appear to us wrong: wrongly conceived, and not borne out by the facts. In the second place, the picture of prosperity is false, couched in individualist and Tory terms, and accepted on their face value, without a rigorous examination from socialist assumptions.

We have passed through a period of post-war prosperity. We have also passed through a period of post-war inflation, never dipping into the deep troughs of a major slump, but oscillating, with alarming regularity, between jumping prices and industrial recession. The inflation question is still on the agenda—unresolved.

What is more, the managerial revolution is not what it seems. The arguments here are more fully worked out in Charles Taylor’s article, which is the first of a series which will take up, in detail, the socialist case against this challenging ideology. But briefly, the managers, where they are ‘in control’, remain the managers of the private corporations, the governors of private property in its latest form in an industrial society (the modern firm). The controllers, who own great segments of the private sector, and who direct its overall strategy—the new capitalists of a corporate economy—are more firmly based now than they have ever been. The managers—tame, mild-mannered, public-spirited though they may be—are the servants (the well-paid, well-cushioned servants) of the system: and the circle of the system remains the accumulation and investment of private wealth, and the making of profits. This picture needs to be much more fully explored and developed. But the essential point is that the making of profits is what keeps the wheels going round: this is the dynamic power that drives the economy and sets the targets for the society.

It follows, then, that we should be driven to ask the question, in what direction is the motor running? What are the trends, the signs, the portents? And here, a vast area opens up which is wholly untouched by Mr. Gaitskell’s deft analysis. We won’t recount the major social imbalances which this system of corporate power establishes for our society, (Charles Taylor has tried to tackle that in his piece); but we can sum up the general picture of an economy which is capable of dealing profitably in consumer goods and personal conveniences (though not *equitably*: the question of economic and class inequalities, which have grown in the last ten years, not receded, must be introduced at this point); but which is incapable of dealing with major areas of our social life: education, town planning, municipal and public rebuilding, roads, pensions, health and welfare in all its aspects, the phased introduction of automation and new technology, the comprehensive re-planning of industries which are in decline, and the public services. Gradually, over the next few issues, we shall highlight these serious contradictions and failures in contemporary capitalism, asking, at every point, are these failures *structural* or *marginal*? will prosperity deal with these *too*, as the by-product of affluence? or are they built-in features of the system, which can only be changed if we are prepared to strike at the very root of the matter—private property and the profit system itself?

Associated with this picture of how capitalism is actually working before our eyes, are three related themes, which we shall develop as well. The first is the urgent political question of the relationship between capitalism and military expenditure. The second is the question of whether capitalism, as it is driven at the moment, is capable of undertaking the most urgent economic task which lies before us: the industrialisation of the backward two-thirds of the world. The third aspect of the problem is the question of whether, by administrative controls and Government ‘interference’ a capitalist economy can be *managed* and directed towards targets radically different from those which the surviving capitalist economies of the world—the US, Germany, Britain and France—are steadily moving towards.

## Tory Images of The Good Life

But the earlier points—about the misplaced priorities of British capitalism, even in its prosperity phase—relate very closely to the lack of socialist assumptions in Mr. Gaitskell’s approach to the whole problem. Can we really accept, at this stage in history, the definition of ‘prosperity’, of ‘the Good Life’, which is now the most popular Tory ‘image’? If it is true, as we argue, that the system has not and cannot provide for what we may generally call the public, social, and community needs of the society (and the *trends*, except in particular sectors which capitalism urgently needs, are moving steadily the other way, both here and in the United States), how is it that we have been driven into the

position of basing a socialist case on a capitalist view of life, a propriety interpretation of human 'needs'? If socialism has roots anywhere, it is in the concept of a community of equals, in the moral principle of sharing and co-operation, in the planned command of skills and resources so that they can be *made* to serve the full needs of the community. If we abandon this we, have abandoned everything for which socialism stands.

Although the provision of an adequate community life has often been appropriated by the social democrats and the public administrators, and its water muddied by the concepts of self-help and State assistance, it *could* be the most dynamic and moving human theme in the restatement of socialism in contemporary terms. To give this up, and lie down before the advance of 'individualism', is not so much a betrayal of the *past* ideals, as a woeful and disastrous failure of the imagination—a collapse before history. Isn't it extraordinary that a serious political party—and a party of the Left—should set itself as its major task to *divest* itself of a certain image in the popular mind? One would think that a party of the Left should be constantly searching, analysing, trying to find what is wrong with society and how it can be put right. The present Labour Party leadership seems to think that it can dispense with this kind of fundamental questioning. Does it *know* how it is going to bring us growth without inflation, have a decent education system, a health service worth the name, how it is going to help the underdeveloped countries, institute a classless society? We have only their say-so that they are going to do these things, they have never let us into the secret of how they are going to be accomplished. Or can it be that there is no secret? Can it be that they believe, following Mr. Crosland that a modern reformed Capitalism, suitably 'guided' will bring us all these blessings in due course? The whole thing represents a tragic failure of political vision, a pigmy's sense of the problems before us, and one which, ironically, cuts across the most cherished aim of the Labour leadership—political office. For, on this view there is no role for a party of the Left which the Liberals could not fill just as well.

The rising, skilled working class, before whom Mr. Gaitskell makes his obeisances, are simply new groups of people, with new aspirations and new visions, living through the end of an old society. *They* are the people whose inarticulate needs—education and welfare and decent homes and pleasant cities, responsibilities before the job and a sense of their own independent dignity before life—are untouched by socialism, as we speak of it today. They are the people about whom Mr. Gaitskell has accepted the modern myth—the crass, debased image of telly-glued, car-raving mindless *consumers*. Whereas, the task of socialism in the sixties and beyond, is to pioneer the opening new horizons, the enlarged experience of the world, the new human ambitions which this class, by a tireless, bitter operation-bootstrap, have opened up *for themselves*, and to give

them political form. The failure of imagination must then be defined, ultimately, as a failure of *political* imagination: the incapacity to take the lead, to stand as a political Party and a movement *in place* of these ideals, to draw in and weld together in political terms the unfelt, unexpressed, unarticulated *needs* of our people *as a community*.

That is because, to stand in the name of what is genuinely new in the society (and that is *not* the way of life of the glossy magazine) would mean confronting the old enemy in new, fancy clothes. In order to establish new priorities for our society, we would have to control "the commanding heights of the economy" (to use a much quoted, much maligned phrase of Lenin's): not control them at a distance, not ask on bended knees that the managers do our job for us, or pray that the controllers of the economy will suffer a change of heart—but control them: as a community. To do that, would in fact mean the re-application of the principle of common ownership to our economic thinking—not as a well-worn shibboleth which must be defended, like Buckingham Palace, because it is *there*—but because we cannot make a system which is geared to go forward in one direction reverse itself, unless we are prepared to work it ourselves, unless it is responsible to us. This is the case—or the elements of it—for common ownership, and if we are going to march forward in our serried ranks in defence of Clause 4 of the Constitution, without going right through, from scratch, to the reasons *why* we *need* common ownership, the fight in 1960 will be as sterile as the defence of the Left proved to be at Blackpool in 1959.

The 'ends' are contained by the 'means', then. If it is *really* a classless society we want, we must face up to the fact that the system which we are trying to tame, which provides Mr. Macmillan's kind of 'prosperity' on the one hand, is what generates class power on the other. Behind the back of the Welfare Revolution, a revival of the class system has silently taken place: and the more profitable it is to supply the *consumer* needs of the community, the more robust the owners, controllers and managers of the system will become, the sounder their social position, the more stable their personal prospects, the greater the gaps in income and privilege, the more divided the society. Are Mr. Gaitskell and Mr. Crosland prepared to ignore *forever* the increasing stability and confidence of our new ruling élite in the country? and its effect on the culture of our society? When is an Executive speech at Conference going to begin, "Let us *really* look at what has been happening within 'the commanding heights of the economy', let us discuss whether we are *in fact* moving towards a more humane and equal society. . . ." *Then*, at last, the economic facts—analysable in any breakdown of income, wealth and privilege in the Blue Books, demonstrable before our very eyes—will have broken through into politics, and we can begin to discuss just what we are going to do about it.

# What's Wrong With Capitalism?—1

Charles Taylor

Charles Taylor tackles the problem of the false priorities of capitalism, particularly in the welfare sector, and asks the fundamental question: are these false priorities structural or marginal to capitalism?

THE FIFTIES have ended in a mood of celebration and self-congratulation. We felt we had a right to be proud of our achievement. Most people clearly felt that somehow we *had* managed to create a more humane, just society: one, if not fit for heroes, at least fit for average, normal human beings. A. J. P. Taylor went so far as to claim, in the *New Statesman* that “we are entering Utopia backwards”.

What justified all this? Whatever the fifties brought, it was certainly not a humane and just society. Quite apart from Suez, Hola and Nyasaland, can we call a society which was so incredibly stingy to its people in old age ‘just’? And as for a society fit for human beings. . . . Why on earth should we be satisfied with a public expenditure on education of £670,000,000, when we *know* that many schools are tumbling down, and there are 40 children to a classroom? Because we could not afford more? But we could afford to spend £400,000,000 on advertising. Why do we begrudge the Health Service its £700,000,000 when our hospitals so obviously need rebuilding? Because of a pressing lack of resources? Why then has the refrain been, “we have never had it so good”? If we are so short, *must* the packaging industry really eat up £500,000,000 a year? Brian Abel-Smith has calculated in *Conviction* that, at the present rate of construction, *six* new Shell buildings will go up before we have rebuilt the hospitals which *now* need rebuilding: and that by then, the date will be 2160!

“There are in Britain today wards (in mental hospitals) which haven't been papered or painted in this century. There are ward kitchens without refrigerators, ovens or hot-plates. There are sluices without bedpan washers. There are patients being fed at a cost of 14s. 10d. a week.”

(B. Abel-Smith, *Conviction*, p. 64)

One has only to scratch the surface of our society to see that our priorities are all wrong. They are not only unjust: they are divorced from any real sense of human need, and strikingly irrational. It is not *just* that too little is spent on welfare—if we were an underdeveloped country, we would have to put up with that. It is that our society puts production for profit before welfare *every time*.

The problem is not just that the priorities are irrational. They also reflect the kind of society that we are, and are becoming more and more—a society where commercial values are uppermost, where what counts is what sells.

“Isn't it possible for the buildings of the Welfare State to keep pace with the buildings that house private enterprise? All around us we see palatial prestige offices,

new shops, new factories—putting to shame the grubby old institutions of welfare . . . I read in the *Times* of 12 May, 1958, that a bank has opened a new branch in Piccadilly Circus. ‘The interior decoration incorporates red marble quarried in Oran, ebony black granite from Sweden, Italian glass mosaic, delabole grey and Italian slate and afromoria, and linoleum patterned with the bank's crest’ . . . there will be no marble for the hospitals—not even glass mosaics. Use them to attract casual customers to the bank. Don't waste them on worried mothers waiting all morning in the out-patients department of the hospital.”

(B. Abel-Smith, *Conviction*, p. 65)

These false priorities are built in to our very notion of prosperity. The growth of prosperity over recent years is measured almost entirely in terms of the rise in the Gross National Product and the number of TV sets, washing machines, cars and so on. Now these consumer durable goods fulfil real human needs: but it is surely wrong to speak as if *all*—or even the most vital—human needs can be met by an increase in the production of consumer goods. And of course no one really believes this. Yet, when Mr. Macmillan wants to bring home to us that we have never had it so good, he is only able to talk in terms of the telly and the washing machine. During the credit squeeze, much more fuss was made about the restrictions on HP credit, than about the cutbacks in public investment: although every member of the public who travelled by public transport must have felt the pinch. Why this fetishism of the consumer durable? Because we live in a business society, and this means that the things we produce for sale on the market are seen as *intrinsically* more important than the services we provide for ourselves as a community. Production for profit is considered the most important economic activity—often as the most important activity of any kind—in our society.

Take education. We cannot bring ourselves to spend enough public money to reduce the size of the classes to 30—presumably because we cannot impose any greater burden of taxation. Yet we give relief to those individuals who pay for their children's public school fees, and to the private corporations which pour tax-exempt funds into the public schools.

And why, in this day and age, have the corporations come to bail out the public schools? This is not just a question of class solidarity. It is also because the public schools provide the cadres for business, the essential managerial elites: and since the priorities—even in education—are established by the needs of the private sector rather than by the needs of the community in general, a new ICI science block at Eton gets priority

over the reduction of the size of classes in the Wandsworth Secondary Modern.

Suppose we were to re-affirm that education should not be simply designed to make people more productive, but that it has a human value, that its role is to give people a minimum standard of culture and the power of understanding and articulating their own experiences, both personal and social? But the human value of education is constantly affirmed in senior common rooms, in conferences and reports, in after-dinner speeches—in fact, everywhere except on the operational level, where money is raised and spent. At this point our ruling élite, who have an almost religious respect for the Greeks, and some of whom even keep a volume of Thucydides as bed-side reading, can immediately find all sorts of other things to do with the money—including even making Britain the n'th power to send up an earth satellite.

Of course, something will be done in the future about education. But what? We need more technicians—as Sputnik I conclusively proved—and we may get them. It is significant that it was Sputnik I and not the state of our culture or the rate of juvenile delinquency which produced this re-appraisal. Industry needs technicians: and so, we are going to get a rapid improvement in technical education, although we have not touched the quality of technical education in the Secondary Modern; we are still not sure when we shall get around to extend the school-leaving age to 16, and we have not taken even the first steps towards making this extra year of schooling something which would be welcomed by secondary school children or teachers. The Crowther Report is hailed as a great advance because it recommends the extension of the school-leaving age in the late sixties—almost a quarter of a century after the Education Act which projected it.

When we consider building, we can see that the false scale of priorities affects more than the welfare services. We see the same squalor in the public sector, contrasting with lavishness in the private. Mr. Jack Cotton will spend £7,000,000, if they let him, on 3/4 of an acre at Piccadilly—enough to build an LCC housing estate of 1,750 flats inside London or of 3,500 outside. And no one can say that we *need* Mr. Cotton's monstrosity more than a new housing estate. We need it as we need a hole in the head.

It is not only a question of contrasting the resources used up in private and public housing. What has happened to the ambitious schemes for town planning which were abroad at the end of the War? There were plans for the major cities which commanded a great deal of public support. We seemed to recognise the fact that cities are not merely places where people find shelter, work and amusement, but human environments in which the majority of us spend most of our lives. The problem was how to concentrate the technical skills of architecture and town planning, with the necessary economic resources, to create a human environment for us to live in. We recognised that beauty is something

essential to man, which he needs in his environment, not merely as a luxury in his off-hours. And yet, what has happened?

Exactly the opposite. Huge tracts of all our cities remain squalid and ugly. The new buildings more often than not increase the ugliness. A larger and larger number of shapeless masses choke the city centres and destroy their line. The reason is not hard to find. To have adequate town planning, we need a much larger public sector, and more municipally controlled development. Certain areas—for instance, Notting Hill, the South Bank, Piccadilly, which ought to be planned as single units—are too large for a single developer. Yet all along the line we have been forced to retreat. The South Bank site was to include Government offices, a National Theatre, a hotel, riverside gardens, a Science Centre. All we have so far is the monstrous Shell building. The LCC now tells us that the Barbican scheme—which attracted worldwide comment—is to be the last of its kind. The rest of the city is to be abandoned to the jungle of the speculator and private developer.

But why has the LCC retreated? The fact is that there is no public money available for planned community development. Government permission is necessary to borrow money, and in recent years, the local authorities have been forced on to the open market. Here interest rates are high, and investors reluctant. Further, the abolition of the development charge makes the cost of land purchase prohibitive (see *The Piccadilly Goldmine* for a more detailed development of this aspect). And yet, no one can plead that the resources for development do not exist, for the buildings *are* going up in Notting Hill and the South Bank anyway. Of course, the Notting Hill development will concentrate on offices and shops, leaving the slums of Talbot Road, where racial tension is rife, to decay. But that's the way the wind blows. The LCC did not make that wind: it has only been guilty of weakness and lack of imagination in bending to it.

## Who Sets The Priorities?

The real question is, who sets the priorities and why? Why is public building squeezed, and the planning of whole areas as units thwarted? Because the interests of profit predominate over the interests of the community, in building as in education. The lesson of the Monico site at Piccadilly is not that some private entrepreneurs lack taste. Some public bodies do as well. The simple fact is that plans for the building were drawn up in order to secure maximum profit for the developer—and no other consideration was permitted to intrude. It was never conceived as part of the human environment of the people who will have to live with Piccadilly for the rest of their lives. It was simply a giant money-spinner—as the examining counsel said, “the biggest aspidistra in the world”).

It is not simply a matter of the aesthetic values of speculators. Speculation in land values has driven the

price of such sites so high, that planning has become almost impossible. On Piccadilly Circus, for instance, land is worth £100 per square foot: a small motor car, cramming the narrow entry into the Circus, is standing on £2,000 worth of asphalt. This ensures that the city will develop in one direction only—expanding dormitory suburbs farther and farther around the fringes of the cities, giant commercial office blocks clogging up the centres; becoming, at nightfall—after the pedestrians and commuters have fought their way down narrow streets into packed tubes, or been brought to a standstill in bumper-to-bumper traffic on congested roads—dim, deserted urban canyons. So that—irony of ironies—the speculators can claim to be doing everyone a public service by “livening up” the deserted city centres with garish, monumental advertisements.

Why are our priorities so wrong, so *obviously* wrong? And why do we tolerate them? During the last election, and after, the fault was laid at the door of the electorate: they're self-satisfied, complacent, “all right”, they don't care. But in what sense is this true? Did the electorate actually vote, in October 1959, against public housing, against planned redevelopment, against better education, against an adequate health service, against an extension of the youth service—and in favour of the private speculator, in favour of more advertising, the public schools and dormitory suburbs? Put this way, the whole case of “All right Jack” needs to be radically re-examined. Are these the issues which were put before the electorate at the Election? Is *that* what Mr. Gaitskell's “programme of moderate and practical reform” was about?

A scale of values which places a higher priority on production for profit than on community and social needs is, surely, rooted in the economic order of society itself. Twenty years ago this would have seemed an obvious truth. And yet, today, it is widely believed that these obvious maladjustments in capitalism are not *structural* but *marginal*: that is, that a few more years of prosperity will see us through. This belief reflects a number of important assumptions which many people make, about capitalism and its trends and tendencies. It is worthwhile to disentangle these arguments, and discuss each in turn.

## The Trends in Capitalism

Is it true that, if we extrapolate from present trends, we have every right to expect capitalism to clear up “these little local difficulties” in the next ten years? In 25 years' time, if a succession of Tory Chancellors are very lucky, we shall have doubled the standard of living. At least this is the expression used. The naive might believe that this entails a doubling of the public services as well. Only personal consumption and private savings will double: public investment may well

trail behind, as it has done in recent years.

In fact, in the last nine years of a Conservative Government, the trends have all been the other way. They have increased the charges for medical, and dental care, the cost of school meals; cut back the building programme for hospitals and schools; made a direct assault upon education and the youth service through the system of Block Grants to local councils; they have made it more difficult for local authorities to raise funds to undertake development and housing projects; they have fallen down on their roads programme, at the same time as they starved and cut public transport. Why should these trends give us any hope or confidence in the capacities of capitalism to right these wrongs in the future?

We are not moving in the right direction. But perhaps—so many people feel—something will intervene to change the present trend of things. But the question is, what kind of change will be adequate? And the answer to this question will depend on whether we think that the present system of capitalism tends to re-enforce the existing priorities, or whether capitalism has already been reformed from within.

The reform of capitalism “from within” is a common thesis on the Left today. The system, Mr. Gaitskell implied in his speech at Blackpool, has been reformed by state intervention and the establishment of a mixed economy—achievements which the Tories dare not undo. Industry, Mr. Crosland argues, is no longer run by ruthless capitalists bent on the maximisation of profit, but by humane, public-spirited managers. . . . “Business leaders are now, in the main, paid by salary and not by profit, owe their power to their position in the managerial structure, and not to ownership”. (C. A. R. Crosland, *The Future of Socialism*, p. 34). It is to this change—it is implied—that we owe the social justice and prosperity of the post-war years: given time, managerial capitalism will take care of education, housing and re-planning as well—with some public-spirited Wykehamists on the Treasury Bench to guide its hand.

The managers of industry are by no means an independent class able to cut itself free of the institutions which employ them. In trying to discover what sort of capitalism we are living through, there is not much point in scrutinising the personal motivations of the new managers. As a matter of fact, some very fine motives have actuated the leaders of business, past and present: an interest in the product itself, or the sense of performing an important social function. But the important point is that, in a capitalist economy such as ours, where the dominant institutions are the large corporations, the main criterion of success or failure is profit. In this respect, it can hardly be argued that our society has changed. Indeed, with the decline in the influence of non-economic institutions, such as the churches, and the shift of ruling-class power towards a firmer base in the corporations, it could be argued

that our society is, if anything, more homogeneously capitalist. The point is not, therefore, whether the individual managers are interested in gain or not: but that the survival, and even more the success, of the institutions they are paid to serve depends on making a profit. Whether by ruthless competition or the expense-account lunch where things are “thrashed out”, the final aim is the accumulation of capital. This drive may be tempered by more humane standards imposed by the rise of the labour movement, and by the increase of wealth in the last decades, but it is only tempered. The main motive remains profit in the old sense.

Thus, whether we consider the managers to be a kind of secular priesthood, as servants of the controllers or as identical with the capitalist class, the criterion of success, and hence the motor force of the institutions which employ them is profit. The firms must show a profit—whether that profit is then distributed to shareholders, or put to reserve. Capital and assets must be maintained and expanded: existing markets extended and new ones opened up: capital privately accumulated and re-invested. If the managers are a new priesthood without personal interests, then they are priests in the Temple of Mammon.

## Has The Profit Motive Disappeared?

Why then is it commonly held that capitalism and its priorities have been radically altered? Crosland himself accepts that “profit remains an essential personal and corporate incentive” (p. 35). The confusion arises because the link between profit and capitalism is not seen, because “it is a mistake to think that profit, in the sense of surplus over cost, has any special or unique connection with capitalism. On the contrary, it must be the rationale of business activity in any society, whether capitalist or socialist, which is growing or dynamic” (Crosland, p. 35). This sounds terribly plausible until one tries to think what it really means, and then one sees that the whole thing hinges on a confusion of three quite distinct senses of the word “profit”. In the first sense the word means simply “surplus over cost”. Read in this way, the statement is a truism. *Any* society which is “growing or dynamic” must create a fund for investment, and one of the best ways of doing this is to charge more for goods than they cost to produce. The Soviet Union does this, taking back through the Turnover Tax enough for new investment and welfare spending.

So far so good. But when Crosland speaks of a “rationale of business activity”, he is speaking of profit as an *incentive*. And here we come to the second sense. If Crosland means “profit” as “incentive for individuals to do productive work”, then again he’s probably on safe ground. It is highly likely that we shall always have to remunerate individuals on an incentive basis, i.e. more pay for more and better work, more pay (or social bonuses) for special responsibilities or particularly dangerous kinds of work.

But the sense of “profit” which is crucial here is the third one. This is the sense in which we speak of it as the incentive for the productive activity, not of *individuals*, but of units of production or *firms*. Here we are no longer talking about how the individuals are remunerated. The workers may be badly paid and the managers may be Spartan in their self-denial and single-minded concentration on production—the image of the classical capitalist—but the rationale of the firm’s activity is still profit. In a capitalist society profit in this sense plays a pivotal role, because the conditions of survival are such that a firm must either make a profit or go under; and, more important, the motivation for growth, for better or more production, is the prospect of greater profit and hence the accumulation of capital.

Now profit in *this* sense is not a necessary feature of *all* possible societies. On the contrary we could have a system where the units of production (the firms) operated in order to ensure a good and rising standard of living to those who worked in them, but where (a) the conditions of survival were not such that the firm had to produce the things that would sell, whether they were useful or needed or not, and (b) where the motivation for growth was not accumulation but the satisfaction of doing creative and socially useful work, the recognition of the society and some greater remuneration for all the individuals involved.

We *could* have such a society, and if we are to get our priorities right, we *must* have it. For it is the existence of profit in the third sense, of the ‘profit system’, which is at the root of the problem. Under a profit system, the criterion for what is worth producing is what will sell, and hence make a profit. That is the reason why we have “the fetishism of the consumer durable” we spoke of earlier. But this is the least serious consequence. More important is the fact that a society dominated by the profit system must tend almost irreversibly to put production for profit first. As long as the main incentive is accumulation it will always be very much in the interest of firms to pre-empt resources for production for profit, at the expense of those enterprises—and they include our essential welfare services—which cannot produce a profit, and which therefore will not be defended by a vested interest. That is the reason why we spend nearly as much, through advertising, stimulating unfelt needs, as we spend on education, why the cars are produced without the roads to drive them on, why Mr. Cotton’s monsters go up while the LCC housing projects get postponed.

If this analysis is right, if these faults are *structural* faults in our system, it is difficult to see where the internal reform within capitalism is going to come from. For as long as the motor of the firm is profit, the primary responsibility of its managers is limited to the firm and its growth. Of course, the rise of the Labour Movement has forced more civilised and humane standards on to management. Many firms now ‘take care’ of part or all of their employees with everything from superannuation schemes to cheap housing, and



more firms will certainly do so in the future. But there is a great danger in exaggerating this change, welcome as it is, into a supposed 'reform' of the system. For these schemes do not begin to solve the problem of providing a decent standard of welfare services for the *whole community*. They serve, on the contrary, to accentuate the double standards in welfare which are more and more in evidence in our society, a system in which workers in the less profitable industries, and non-profit making nationalised industries, not to speak of the submerged fifth, will go to the wall—and moreover where their distress remains unnoticed amid the general rejoicing over 'progressive' management. If the Labour Movement ever decided, on the plea that capitalism was 'reformed', to confine itself to a struggle within the system to make management more progressive, it would be in danger of renouncing one of the finest parts of its tradition, the struggle to establish a responsibility by the whole community for *all* its members for the provision of vital human needs. It would become what it is already suspected of being in some quarters, a loosely bound congeries of pressure groups.

This principle of community responsibility is the *socialist* principle behind the whole concept of welfare. The "welfare state" was only a beginning: the trouble is that the concept of welfare and community responsibility has fallen dead in the hands of the Labour rethinkers—so that it now appears to be another way of defending the "underdog" in society, rather than being extended into the revolutionary and challenging concept that it is.

## Controlling the Machine

This is all the more worrying in that it is happening at a time when welfare is retreating and the individualist ethic of capitalism advancing. It is not only that welfare services have been nibbled away at the fringes; it is also that we have seen a refurbishing of one of the hoariest myths of classical capitalism—that the choices made by the individual consumers on the market are somehow more "free" and therefore finer and more valuable than those made by the community as a whole. This idea, summed in the slogan "Tory freedom works", is a debilitating myth. For the really vital choices which we are discussing here are forever excluded from the realm of "free" choices. The notion that we could go about setting our basic social priorities via the market as consumers is nothing short of absurd. How would the consumer go about "choosing" to have more education and less advertising? The former is not a commodity on the market and the latter is the result of decisions taken in industry to affect *his* spending, not the other way around. How could we choose to have less Monico office buildings and more municipal housing? Can we do this as "free consumers"—via the market? The

whole idea is meaningless. If the question of what our cities are going to look like in fifty years is left to consumer "choice", the cities of 2010 will reflect, not what we want, but what the speculators choose we should have.

But how, in face of the profit system are we going to get our priorities right? This is, or should be, one of the burning problems of the Left to-day. But the tragedy is that the leadership of the Labour Party is so pre-occupied with the task of disengaging itself, by the most devious possible means, from the 'image' of nationalisation, that they cannot even get the problem in focus, much less begin to answer it. They seem to have swallowed wholesale the view that capitalism has reformed itself, that the existence of the profit system is no longer relevant to our social problems—the view that is summed up in that wonderfully question-begging sentence in *Industry and Society*: "Under increasingly professional managements, large firms, are, as a whole, serving the nation well" (p. 48). But once one has one's head firmly buried in this sand, all clear thought about the problem becomes impossible. One cannot even raise any questions about the tendencies of the system, one can only speak about the decisions of individuals.

The major scapegoat is of course the Tory government. But here, again, one misses the point if one sees this in terms of individual decisions alone. The regressive legislation of the Tory government doesn't spring from a kind of malevolence or egocentricity on the part of the Front Bench. To believe this is fundamentally to underestimate the Tories. They are only administering a system which makes certain demands which have to be met. When the Rent Act, for instance, was hailed as 'courageous', this was not sheer humbug. Landlords, like other entrepreneurs, require a certain profit if they are going to fulfil their economic function. It therefore could be seen as courageous to court unpopularity in order to pay this price for the greater good.

It is as if the Labour leadership saw our economy as a kind of machine which could be made to operate in any desired direction, depending on the intentions of those who are at the levers of control. With a Labour government we could have the whole thing churning out greater welfare. But if one needs an analogy, our system is much more like a live beast than a machine. And this is why, side by side with a bland optimism about Labour's goals, went an extraordinary caginess, shading into embarrassment and finally panic, about *how* they were to be achieved. The problem was that any plan which could actually have achieved even these 'modest' reforms would, if announced, have evoked howls of rage from the beast and frightened not only the electorate but the prospective tamers as well. The income tax pledge was like a final confession of impotence, and this is how, it seems, the electorate took it.

And what are the 'levers of control' that we have at our disposal to shape the mixed economy to our ends?

There are the resources of economic planning, there is the influence of the public sector and there are the possibilities of taxation. It is worth taking these three in turn to see how they could be used to carry through an attempt by the community to take these decisions into its own hands.

Whenever people talk about planning, not least the Labour party, they speak of a whole barrage of controls—from investment allowance to exchange controls—which are designed primarily to increase investment and efficiency while avoiding the pitfalls of inflation or a flight from Sterling. If all these worked—and this is doubtful—we would no doubt have a more dynamic economy, becoming a little more like West Germany every day. But the kind of planning necessary to *reverse* our priorities must involve somewhere a major re-allocation of resources, i.e. it involves more than inducing people to do what they are doing to-day only more efficiently and on a bigger scale.

It is when the government tries to force corporations to do what they are not doing, that we get the trouble. The Tory government's remedy is simple: you just have to make it worth their while. Loans, grants, orders, must be given from the public purse until the idea becomes worthy of consideration. In this way Colville's was induced to place their new mill in Scotland, and the BMC the same. In this way too, a rationalisation of the aircraft companies was effected. But wherever the hand-out can't be applied, the government pleads in vain. The Chancellor has been knocking on the door of the private corporations to reduce prices for several months, with no perceptible result whatever. The Minister of Housing has been abjuring speculators not to put any more office blocks in the centre of cities: they continue to go up. And so on.

## The System Resists Planning

There are exceptional circumstances, such as war-time, when planning of a tougher kind is tolerated. But the acquiescence can only be bought for this by placing the managers themselves in the key positions. Rogow and Shore in their *Labour Government and British Industry* have admirably documented this well-known story for the post-war period before even these controls were dismantled. The authorities, therefore, began to behave and look more like trade associations and oligopolistic combines than arms of the state. The whole system couldn't help breeding inefficiency and, within the terms of the system, *had* to be dropped. No one, least of all Labour has suggested its revival.

The brute fact about the profit system is that it resists any planning which would take the real decisions about the allocation of resources away from it. "Whitehall interference" would mean that the scope for expansion and accretion of profit is held back, that some

corporations are disadvantaged. It would mean cutting down the very freedom to do what the corporations *must* do if they are to be successful by the only criterion of success that can be applied to them—the freedom to accumulate. Thus, public planning and control strike at something more than the wealth of the controllers. It strikes at their very *raison d'être*, at the myth of their social role, at their position in society as "bosses", indeed at the whole notion of a society with bosses. It will therefore be resisted by them with a force out of proportion to the loss of income involved.

The government's role is therefore restricted to controlling the over-all level of activity, so as to avoid inflation in one direction and mass unemployment in the other. The Tory Government's weakness for the weapon of monetary control is not the result simply of some nostalgic fixation on the golden age of Bank Rate before World War I. It is because monetary policy is the *only* way that they can control the *total* level of activity in the economy, without interfering with particular decisions taken in the private sector. If some firms go to the wall or cut down investment because of a credit squeeze, at least it will not be because the Government has *decided* to cut investment in that particular sector. The market will decide. This is the only real planning that we have.

## The Public Sector?

What of the public sector? Isn't this the thin end of the wedge? In fact, of course, the public sector in the mixed economy has been dictated *to* by the private sector, rather than dictating the priorities and directions of the economy. The private sector has successfully prevented the extension of the public sector, starving the publicly owned airlines to cushion the private companies, cutting in on the railways and "setting free" road transport. If the private sector is to obey the laws of the system, it must be free to eat up resources when and how it sees fit. So that, in the fight against inflation, it has always been easiest for the Government to slash investment *first* of all in the public sector. Only much later does the credit squeeze begin to work in the private sector. This process has been going on, in all the nationalised industries, right throughout the last five years. At the same time, the public sector is used as the pace-setters in resisting wage claims throughout the economy—as happened in the case of London Transport in 1958, and as is happening on the railways now.

All corporations are united in opposing the extension of the public sector or even the allocation of greater resources to it—even those which are not touched directly by the proposed expansion. It should be irrelevant for the building trade whether they were contracted to build houses by a local authority or prestige buildings by Shell. But it does matter to Shell: and a kind of rudimentary solidarity plays here, not unmixed with the prospect of greater and quicker profit.

At the same time, the private sector requires a public sector, provided it is not too large. The public sector, after all, is the least painful place to cut back on in times of inflation. It provides a cheap and efficient power and transport system. It is also an essential stabiliser to the economy, provided it is docile. This means that the public sector must accept to have its investment axed whatever the consequences, and refrain from siphoning resources away from the private sector. It must be kept generally subordinate. This explains the absurd pricing policies imposed on the nationalised industries—i.e. that “taking one year with another”, they should not be required to make a profit. The only branch of public expenditure which arouses no hostility from the private sector is in the massive and profitable expenditure on “defence”.

So the weapon of taxation becomes our last resort. But here we are in a cleft stick, as Labour's election pledge showed. Under the Conservatives a ceiling to taxation has been fixed and will be respected. Would it be different under Labour? Even Mr. Crosland has admitted that he cannot conceive of the private sector agreeing to a dramatic rise in taxation. And we are not just talking here of personal income tax. In the end, we would have to transfer resources out of the private sector, and hence reduce profit, in some cases dramatically. They wouldn't stand for it. And in a sense they are right. The motor of the system is after all profit, the private accumulation of capital. If we impose very heavy taxes, we are siphoning off the fuel from this motor. We cannot expect it to drive on regardless. At a certain point we will tax the private sector so heavily, that we will affect its capacity (or more important, its willingness) to invest.

No one knows at what point this would occur. But the possibilities are unnerving. The ultimate weapon of those who control capital is not just that they sit on it, (i.e. induce stagnation), but that they export it. Everyone remembers the capital flight of 1951 which helped to bring down the Labour Government. And the thought paralyses the will. If we are going to try to take the profit out of the profit system, we shall have sooner or later to replace it. We shall have to raise the question of common ownership again in a different context.

## The Inhuman Priorities

The present priorities are wrong. Centrally, structurally wrong. And yet, at the same time, they appear endowed with an apparent inevitability. No one would go out of their way to defend them. Yet it is quite clear, that when the Election came, very few people had confidence that Labour knew how wrong they were, or why they were wrong, or any proposals for setting them right. A majority of the electorate agreed to Mr. Gaitskell's “modest proposals”. But they were not sure enough of Labour's capacity to bring them about to risk “economic mismanagement” or to throw their own

tangible prosperity into the melting pot. Most people knew that if we pushed the priorities too far, we might kill the goose which is now, after all, laying the golden eggs of prosperity—capital. Did Labour have a goose of its own?

## Are They Inevitable?

The sense that the present priorities are *inevitable* is increased by the fact of advertising. It is not simply that advertising ensures an expansion in the demand for consumer goods. It is not even that advertising has had the effect of creating a certain image of prosperity, and even sometimes of the Good Life. It is because the bombardment of the public consciousness with a certain kind of product inculcates an unspoken belief about what the progress of our civilisation has made possible, and what we just simply have to put up with as the best of a bad job. The latest gadgets for automatic cups of early morning coffee fall in the first category: the miserable state of our hospitals falls in the second. We are rarely, if ever, told that we could have a decent education, modern hospitals, or clean and beautiful cities.

In fact, we are led to believe exactly the opposite. The public and welfare sectors are continuously associated with what is drab and uninteresting and distant. But here is the vicious circle. The drabness of the Labour Exchange, the hospital out-patients and the railway waiting room is due to the misordering of priorities, and the inevitable tendency of capitalism always to skimp on this kind of ‘unnecessary’ expenditure. To accept these conditions is to accept the society and its priorities as given.

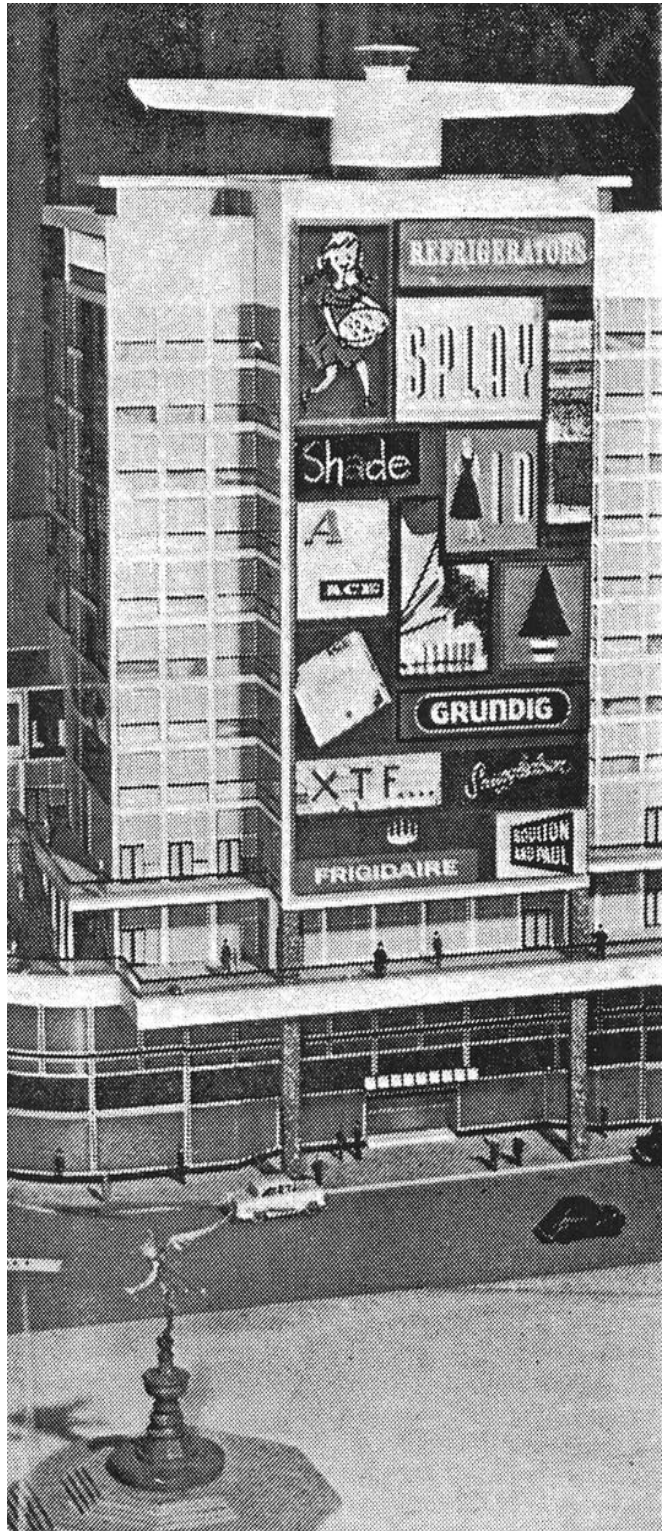
The only way that we can really get our priorities right is to do away with the dominating influence of the profit system, and to put in its place a system primarily based on common ownership. Any attempt to adjust capitalism to the needs of the community will be brought up sharply against the innate character and drives of the system itself. Certainly it is true that, given common ownership (*not* state monopoly), we shall have to experiment with different forms of control, so as to draw upon the social responsibilities of people in such vital things as what kind of education they give their children, what sort of houses they live in, where the hospitals are placed, when the roads will be built, what the city will be like to live in fifty years from now, what proportion of our national resources go to consumer goods, what proportion to investment and to welfare. These ought to be the really critical *democratic* decisions in society today. We do not want to replace capitalism by yet another form of paternal bureaucracy. That is the really important challenge to democratic socialism today. But before us stand the inhuman priorities of capitalism: the *only* political question is how we can understand and change them in order to achieve an enlargement of freedom and responsibility, and a greater control by people over the society in which they live.

# PICCADILLY GOLDMINE

**DUNCAN MACBETH**

In this article, Duncan Macbeth develops the case against Capitalism in terms of urban planning and reconstruction.

**Jack Cotton's proposed Monico building:  
"The biggest aspidistra  
in the world" . . .**



BEFORE THE war capitalist society exhibited obvious symptoms of disease—the feverish stock exchange boom, the slump, mass unemployment, the derelict areas, poverty in the midst of plenty. Today these symptoms have largely (though perhaps temporarily) disappeared. The stock exchange boom is with us, but not the slump, and the Conservative Party has been swept back to power on the full tide of “prosperity”. It is less obvious, but nevertheless true, that the kind of prosperity we are experiencing can, like poverty, be a disease, and give rise to forms of crisis as difficult to solve as those we experienced before the war.

The unlimited proliferation of cancer cells can destroy the human organism. The unlimited proliferation of private motor cars and speculatively built office blocks can strangle and destroy the city, disrupting its centre and dispersing its inhabitants throughout the countryside. For the city, too, is a living organism requiring certain conditions and a certain discipline for healthy growth and evolution. A building and a stock exchange boom may raise land values in city centres to such dizzy heights that no public authority can afford to create out of the present chaos new, more spacious, beautiful and efficient cities.

The period of post-war reconstruction is nearly over. The problem today is the renewal of undamaged cities containing buildings of every age and condition. Most of the new office blocks and shops are replacing older buildings which have been torn down to make room for them. Sometimes these buildings have been worn out and ripe for replacement. But often they have been sound, if old fashioned; the new Vickers skyscraper in Millbank is going up on the site of Victorian flats that were in good condition; St. James’ Theatre and the Stoll (built only 50 years ago, and one of the most modern theatres in London) have come down to make way for offices. The same process is taking place in all large towns where there is a big demand for office accommodation.

The motive power behind these developments is profit, and the decision whether to redevelop a particular site or not depends, not upon the age or obsolescence of the buildings to be demolished, but upon the difference in value between the old buildings and the new ones. Where the operation of demolition and reconstruction shows a sufficiently large profit, then no matter how good the condition of the building, no matter how socially important its purpose, the developers move in.

The process is succinctly explained in Technical Memorandum No. 9 on Central Areas, circulated to planning authorities by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government last year:

“For the kind of development normally undertaken by private enterprise (though on occasions by public bodies) the developer is normally interested only in the profitability of the project: whether, that is, the money values (benefit) will be sufficiently above the cost of the land and works to make the project worthwhile.”

As profit is the mainspring of development, capital

is concentrated where the profits are greatest; and that, today, is in the central areas. Developers cannot or will not rehouse working-class tenants, because there is no profit in it. Developers are interested in the prosperous shopping and business districts of prosperous towns, but not in Poplar, Bethnal Green, Dewsbury or Nelson and Colne. So the order of priorities that would be dictated by any rational assessment of social need is reversed. More and more capital is poured into already congested central districts of London, Birmingham and other prosperous towns, while the public authorities are starved of the capital to redevelop the rotting industrial and working-class areas, particularly in the Midlands and the North, and are unable to provide schools, houses, roads, parks.

Nowhere is this reversal of priorities more glaringly obvious than in Piccadilly Circus. Jack Cotton’s company, City Centre Properties Ltd., and the Legal and General Assurance Society Ltd, are investing (they say) £7 million in redeveloping three quarters of an acre on the Monico site on the north of Piccadilly Circus. When it was suggested at the Inquiry that the London County Council, as the planning authority, should buy 14 acres of land near Piccadilly Circus so as to be able to plan its redevelopment properly, counsel for the LCC pointed out that the LCC’s entire capital budget annually for all purposes, including new schools, fire stations, houses, baths, sewage works, roads, parks, old people’s and children’s homes, and town planning, is only £30 million a year, and that to acquire these 14 acres would cost £50 million. The LCC’s capital budget for town planning is only £1,500,000 a year, and of this a mere £500,000 is earmarked for the purchase and removal of the thousands of factories that are sited in residential areas (mainly working class) where they are the cause of dangerous traffic, noise and air pollution.

These figures suggest two questions. The first is, why is the LCC so short of capital compared with Mr. Cotton? The second is, why does it cost so much to buy land or property in central areas?

The first question can be answered shortly. The LCC’s budget is limited, not only by the timidity of the LCC leadership (which envisages no increase in the rate of capital investment in the foreseeable future) but also by the control exercised by the government and the stock exchange. The LCC, like any public authority, cannot borrow a penny without government sanction. The government not only limits the borrowing of all local authorities, but also limits the purposes for which money may be borrowed. It might prove profitable to the ratepayers if local authorities themselves developed central areas, and let shops and offices, or if the local authorities bought land and collected the profits from increasing land values. But they are not allowed, as a rule, to borrow for such things. The government, moreover, insists that money must be borrowed at high rates of interest from the money market, which guarantees a vast income for the moneylenders, and

a fat rake off for the financial houses which organise the loans. The Stock Exchange regulates the queue of public borrowers that comes seeking loans, rations the amount that each authority can borrow, and so, with the government, controls the level of capital expenditure for public purposes. The cost of borrowing is in any case so high that large-scale public expenditure forces up the rates: and a Labour authority that borrows too much is likely to be ejected by ratepayers who resent higher rates.

## The Building Spree

The short answer to the second question is that private ownership of land confers a monopoly, and that in all central districts the demand for sites on which large profits can be made is concentrated on such a limited supply of land, that land values rise very sharply. But this situation, which is normal in capitalist society, has been aggravated by Conservative policy since 1951. A building boom was unleashed by the removal of building licenses, which had been used by the Labour government to concentrate building resources on the more essential projects, and by the abolition of the "development charge", which was intended to prevent the landowners pocketing the increase in land values arising on redevelopment.

The abolition of the "development charge" restored the "free market" in land between private buyers and sellers, but public authorities still retained the right to buy land compulsorily at its existing use value, until the 1959 Town and Country Planning Act obliged local authorities to pay the full market value for land.

But "market value" is now largely determined (and this is the strangest perversion of all), by town and country planning. If land is zoned under the development plan as agricultural or green belt land, it cannot normally be built on and has only agricultural value. But if it is zoned for industrial, commercial or residential uses, its value is multiplied ten, twenty times or more. By zoning the area of land in which building is allowed, so as to preserve green belts and to prevent buildings going up in the wrong places, town planning when combined with a free market in land confers immensely valuable monopoly rights on the owners of land where development *is* allowed. Moreover, planning authorities control the density and bulk of building. The more building a developer can put on a site, the more he can make out of it, and the more valuable the site becomes. A planning officer, by permitting another storey in an office block, can put £100,000 into the pockets of a developer at the stroke of a pen. Agricultural land where building is allowed is known to planning officers as "gold land". The more services public authorities provide at public expense (schools, shopping centres, buses and railways, parks, playgrounds) the more valuable nearby land becomes. Local authorities who buy land for housing or schools at market value today are having to buy back land values that have been created by their own enterprise.

The public pay for the amenities, but the landowners pocket the profits.

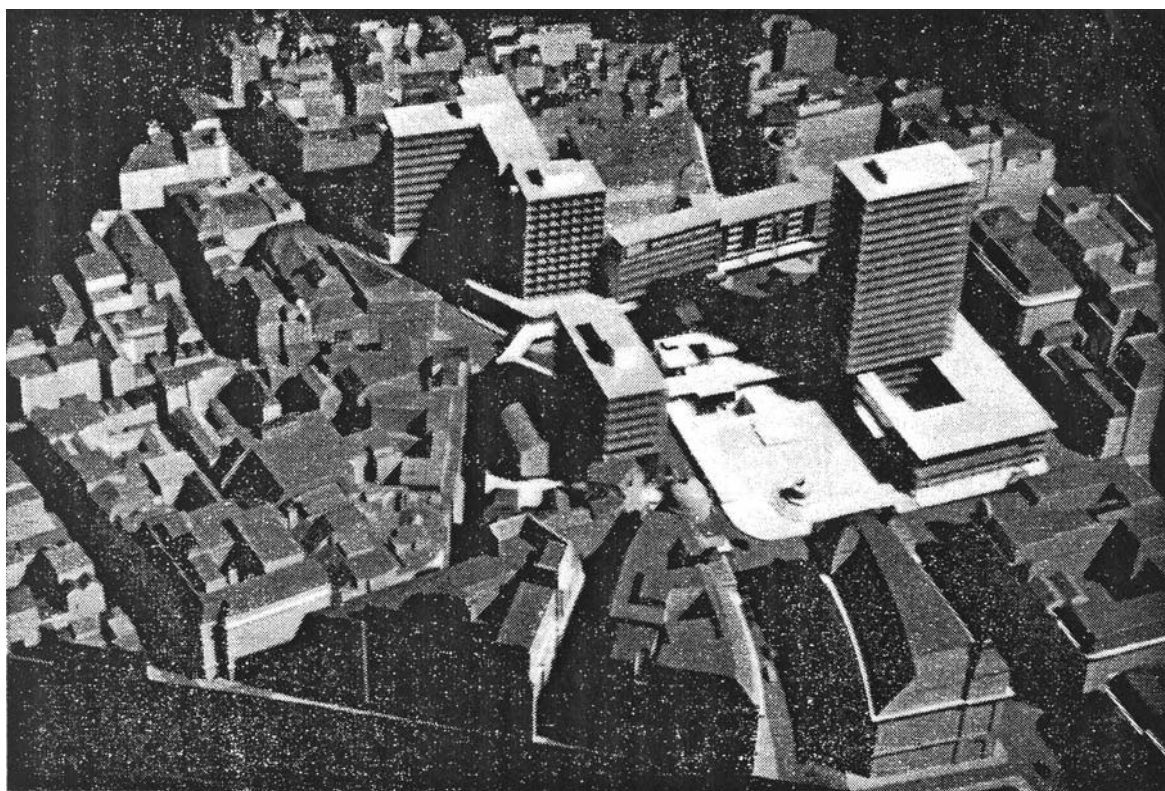
If there is gold to be made near the green belts, the streets (or the basements) of the city centres are paved with diamonds. Evidence was given at the Piccadilly Circus Inquiry by Mr. Dulake, one of the most experienced chartered surveyors in this country, that the value of the Monico site acquired by Jack Cotton's companies was £100 a square foot, or £4,315,000 an acre. He estimated that this site of approximately three-quarters of an acre would cost about £3 million, that the building to be erected would cost £1,525,000 and that the developed site would be worth £6,944,000 giving the developers a profit of £2,419,000, or 50 per cent on their capital outlay. Whether these figures precisely correspond with Cotton's actual outlay and profit—which his counsel was desperately anxious to conceal from public scrutiny—is really immaterial. Mr. Dulake's figures give a true picture of the profitability of development in central London. It must not be thought that £2,419,000 represents the full total of the profits made from a speculation of this kind. Jack Cotton himself had to buy the site from its present owners at market value, and each of them has collected an enormous profit arising from the sharp increase in land values in recent years. Indeed, the real cost of the physical changes, clearing the site and erecting a new building, is probably no more than £3 million, so that the total accruing to all parties from land values alone would be £4 million—and this on a site no bigger than a largish garden.

Mr. Dulake gave a graphic illustration at the Inquiry of the way in which public expenditure raises land values and lines the private purse. The LCC's road improvements will enlarge the Circus, and sites which formerly had frontages on back streets will acquire frontages on the Circus itself. "When the London Pavilion is demolished," said Mr. Dulake, "that site (a site in Great Windmill Street) would front on to the extended Piccadilly Circus, and its value, of course, would be multiplied many, many times. I personally do not think it is right that the present landowner of that particular site should enjoy that kind of increment". And, it might be added, if the LCC ever wants to buy the site referred to, in order to develop the area comprehensively, it will have to pay a price multiplied "many, many times" by its own expenditure in enlarging the Circus.

## The Developers Set The Pace

Because the profits to be made on redevelopment are so great, it is the developers and not the local planning authority who set the pace and determine the form of development. The cost of urban motorways in Central London was estimated last year by the London Roads Committee at over £16 million a mile, two-thirds of which represents the cost of land.

It is insufficiently realised that a revolution is taking place in the scale of building and town planning.



1. This is a model of the "advisory scheme" for Piccadilly Circus prepared by the Planning Division of the LCC Architects' Department. It is based on a traffic improvement, to enlarge the Circus in two stages, the first in 1965, the second not until after 1972. This scheme attempted to solve the traffic-pedestrian problem by introducing upper level walkways, but its achievement is dependent entirely on the co-operation of the private developers of each site. The first two developers, Jack Cotton on the north side, and J. Lyons and Co. on the Trocadero site, have rejected the upper level conception.

The city of the future requires completely new architectural forms which cannot be realised on individual building sites. It is the structure and design of the city, or at least of the city precinct, that matters today, because such problems as traffic and pedestrian circulation cannot be solved within the confines of a single building site. If, moreover, modern factory production and modern building techniques are to be harnessed to the task of city reconstruction so as to reduce its cost and raise its standard, they have to be based on the development of large areas and a carefully timed programme of work. Aesthetically, too, the design of the individual building has become of less and less importance. Even if the Piccadilly Circus building had been a fine example of architecture it was a shocking example of town design: and a medley of unrelated buildings, however well designed in themselves, cannot add up to a well designed modern city.

In theory the planning authorities possess the necessary powers to plan the use of land and control the design of buildings over wide areas. The 1947 Act enabled planning authorities to define areas of comprehensive development, and to designate them for compulsory purchase. There are many areas where, for obvious

reasons, no large-scale redevelopment is likely for many years. But wherever an area is ripe for rebuilding, the division of the land between a multiplicity of land-owners and an obsolete road pattern will prevent its redevelopment for new purposes, to new standards. The alternative is for rebuilding to take place on the old street pattern, perpetuating its congestion, danger, inconvenience and other drawbacks for another 80 years or more.

There were two main advantages of defining a comprehensive development area: the whole area could be made liable to compulsory purchase, and substantial grants, up to 90 per cent of their loss, were available to local authorities. The first advantage remains but nearly all town planning grants were abolished by the 1958 Local Government Act, which substituted a block grant. This has undermined the financial basis of comprehensive planning, particularly when it is combined with the severe financial burdens and restrictions already mentioned, and the elimination of housing subsidies for general needs.

All the major successes of British town planning since the war (and there have been a few, notably at Coventry, in Stepney-Poplar and in the new Barbican



scheme in the City of London, for all their defects) have been achieved in Comprehensive Development Areas. For outside the CDA's the planning authorities have to rely upon negotiations with landowners and developers to secure planning by consent. They can buy land compulsorily for road improvements or other purposes, but they cannot replan an area, introduce a new layout or street pattern. The initiative rests largely with the landowners and developers, who decide which sites to develop, and when, and for what purposes. The planning authority cannot prevent the demolition of a building (unless it is of historical or architectural importance, and not always then), neither can it refuse permission for a new one that complies with its regulations, except by buying the site out of funds that it does not possess.

Inside the Comprehensive Development Areas the planning authorities negotiate from strength. But outside it they negotiate from weakness, and the results were well described by Sir William Holford, the Professor of Town Planning at London University, at the Piccadilly Circus Inquiry:

"One of the things that is left out of development under the present Town and Country Planning Act is the positive and constructive side of civic design or public development. The public authorities when they are not in fact owning the buildings, can only act under the Planning and Building Acts, and their control is a negative control. The process becomes one of negotiating between the private and the public developer to secure some compromise between the two (interests). But the imaginative, the positive, the non-revenue-producing elements in the scheme, which the public could very much enjoy, are necessarily left out: things like strolling space, escalators, promenade decks, traffic bridges, vantage points, embellishments of all sorts, right down to mundane things like seats, public conveniences and so on—those are the sort of things which tend to be left out."

The only solution, he said, was for the public authority to acquire the freeholds, plan for the provision of all the "public aspects" in a comprehensive development scheme, and then either rebuild itself or lease sites to private developers who would have to conform to the scheme.

Piccadilly Circus is *not* a comprehensive development area. The LCC's planners produced in 1956 an Advisory Plan (to which I will return later) for Piccadilly Circus, and in 1958 the Town Planning Committee approved it as a basis for negotiation with developers, stating that its implementation depended upon securing their agreement. The design jointly evolved by Jack Cotton's architects and by the LCC was the outcome precisely of this process of negotiation described by Sir William Holford, in which the requirements of the public are sacrificed to the requirements of the developers.

Piccadilly Circus brought to a head the crisis in town planning that has been maturing for the last ten years, because it concentrated at a single point familiar to everybody in the country all the elements in the crisis. It was the last straw. Many buildings as bad or worse have been built since the war; the City of London,

outside the Barbican and St. Paul's, is a monument to the short-sightedness and greed of the City landowners and the City Corporation, who have simply restored the old chaos on a bigger scale. But Jack Cotton's "artist's impression" of the building his architects and the LCC had evolved for Piccadilly Circus provoked, among architects and town planners in particular, a sudden realisation that the time had come for a stand to be made before it was too late. For here was the first building in what will undoubtedly be the rebuilding of large parts of the West End. If the battle for planning and architecture were lost here, it would be lost throughout the West End. The building was ugly in itself, and proposed a blatant advertising hoarding 155 feet high, related neither to any coherent architectural design for the Circus nor to any comprehensive plan for its redevelopment. For the first time in any major architectural controversy, the most important question became, not the aesthetic quality of the building (important as that is), but the right of the pedestrian to enjoy the centre of his city in beautiful surroundings, free from the danger, the crush, noise, and fumes of motor traffic. Enlightened public opinion, which wants to get the maximum benefit from the motor car, began to clamour at the Piccadilly Circus Inquiry for a city of a new kind, in which the motor was reduced to the status of the servant rather than the master of mankind, and the civilised qualities of the city were restored. For it is the motor vehicle, above all, that dictates a revolutionary change in the scale and form of town building.

## Mr. Cotton Against The Plan

We have been trying for 50 years to adapt a street system that grew up in the days of horse power to the scale and speed of the motor vehicle, and we have failed. The motor vehicle has rendered the traditional pattern of streets and buildings that has lasted for thousands of years completely out-of-date. The multi-purpose road, fronted by buildings, lined by pavements, and used indiscriminately by everything from heavy lorries to women with prams and children going to school, is intolerable.

There is no space here to deal with the essential measures of national and regional planning that are required to solve the traffic problem. Clearly these include planned production of motor vehicles and the development of the road system as part of an integrated transport system, in which the right use is made of each form of transport. But even if we take the most far reaching measures to decongest the cities and rationalise their transport systems, the motor vehicle will be used in future on a scale that cannot be reconciled with the existing street pattern. We do not want to thrust the motorist into a mechanical transport sewer any more than we want to thrust the pedestrian into subways and tunnels. The primary object in the design, which must take as its starting point the city as it is, with buildings we value

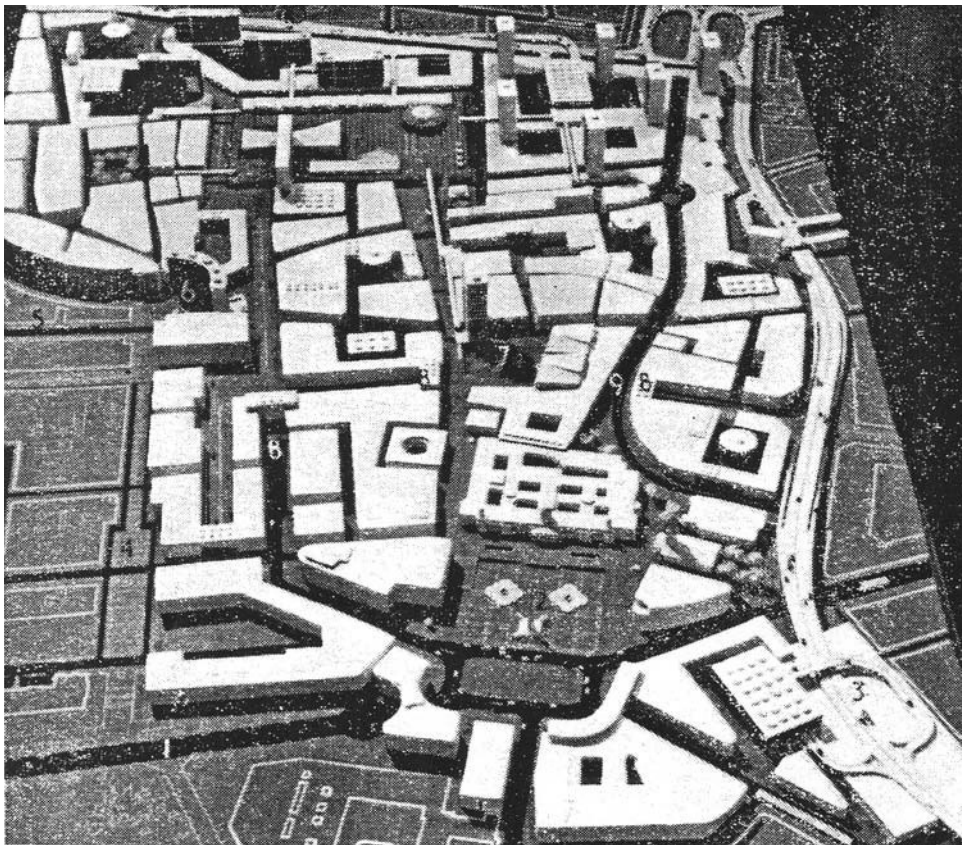


and all the human qualities of community life, is to transform it and enrich it without losing the things we value. This is a technical and artistic problem of the utmost difficulty, but it is capable of solution if our best planners, architects and engineers are given the chance to study it, and the resources to bring their plans to life.

Piccadilly Circus is an example of the street which has already been renewed twice on the old pattern, and is going to be renewed for a third time on a pattern which will be modified by the LCC's plans, but not fundamentally altered. It is a prime example of an antiquated engineering solution to the traffic problem dictating the town planning and influencing the architecture. For the origin of the entire Piccadilly Circus crisis is the LCC's intention, formed more than 20 years ago, to enlarge the Circus into a rectangular roundabout in two stages; first, by demolishing the London Pavilion and slicing

the apex off Jack Cotton's triangular Monico site, and at a later stage (after 1972) redeveloping the Criterion site on the south of the Circus and using a widened Jermyn Street as the south side of the roundabout. When this "improvement" has been effected, Piccadilly Circus, which now carries some 55,000 vehicles a day, should be capable of carrying some 80,000.

It is obvious that an enlarged roundabout, which is in any case a very old-fashioned solution even to the traffic problem, does nothing to make life better for the pedestrian. The enlargement of the Circus is not part of any grand design for the solution of London's traffic problem, let alone to make Central London an agreeable place, for the Labour Government forbade the LCC to include any bold new road proposals in the 1951 Development Plan. No final decision has been reached even on the road layout or on the measures required



3. This model of the Trafalgar Square-Soho area illustrates the ideas of K. Smigielski, an architect-planner who won second prize in a recent competition for a new road system for London. It shows the immensity of the changes that would be required to achieve a real solution of the problems of central London. North-South and East-West elevated motor roads south of Oxford Street (10) and east of Charing Cross (9) carry the through traffic, while new roads carry local traffic in tunnel (8) under Leicester Square and St. James's Park, diverting most of the traffic from Piccadilly Circus (6). Trafalgar Square (2) is reserved for pedestrians, who can walk up to a pedestrians-only Leicester Square (7), and on over elevated and covered footpaths to a new pedestrian concourse in Soho (11). Lower Regent Street (4) and Piccadilly (5) carry only local traffic. Charing Cross Station has a multi-storey garage. The architectural ideas are unimportant: Soho for example, could equally well be redeveloped in a way that retained its intimate, human scale. But the planning ideas suggest one way of humanising the city centre in the motor car age. (Reproduced by courtesy of the *Architects' Journal*).

to separate the traffic from the pedestrians, although the LCC evidence at the Inquiry suggested that they should be driven underground. As Dr. Thomas Sharp, the former President of the Town Planning Institute said at the Inquiry:

"until the space and the arrangements required for the movement of vehicles and pedestrians are carefully, fully and deliberately planned as a whole, it will in my opinion be the height of folly to allow development of this kind to take place. A comprehensive plan is indispensable, and that plan must precede the redevelopment of the locality in terms of building."

It is almost universally agreed among architects, planners and engineers today that the only way to solve the urban traffic problem is to segregate pedestrians from vehicles, often by using different levels. This will probably never be achieved totally and can only be achieved gradually, but a start must be made wherever redevelopment takes place.

This was the almost unanimous evidence of the architects and planners who gave evidence at the Inquiry. Yet Stewart-Brown QC, counsel for the LCC (which has pioneered segregation at the Barbican where it will be possible for motorists and pedestrians to move about a 35-acre site without ever crossing each other's paths), condemned such schemes as "visionary and impracticable" at Piccadilly Circus, and declared that to get rid of the vehicular traffic overground or underground was "no way to deal with a capital city in the 20th century". In fact, it is only in the 20th century that it has become essential to do so, and the great merit of the LCC's Advisory Scheme was that it introduced the idea of a pedestrian walkway system at first floor level. Here at least was the beginning of a new conception. If carried through over an area extending far beyond Piccadilly Circus, if carried to its logical conclusion by placing all the entrances to shops and other buildings at first floor level too, so that there was no need for ground level pavements, it might have been a solution. But, instead of trying to develop and perfect this idea, or to seek for better solutions, the LCC capitulated to Jack Cotton, the first developer to come along, and collaborated with him in designing a building which did not fit in either with the architectural or the planning conceptions of the Advisory Plan.

## The LCC Caves In

The LCC can, truthfully, plead that it lacks the capital to finance comprehensive development at Piccadilly Circus. It could have turned its guns on the Tory government and the speculators, and accused them of ruining the city. It could have turned Cotton's application down flat, allowed him to appeal, and thrown the responsibility for accepting or rejecting his building on the government. It could have asked for financial aid for the government. It can argue legitimately, as it has done, that even if it had another £50 million it might prefer to spend it on more urgent tasks of reconstruction elsewhere. There is in fact no particular reason why Piccadilly and the West End should be rebuilt now, apart

from the fact that the speculators see the chance of making a fortune.

What the LCC had no right to do, as a Labour Council with a progressive record in town planning and architecture, was to surrender weakly to all the difficulties, and then proclaim that the result was good planning and good architecture. It never seriously tried to compel Jack Cotton to accept upper level walkways. On the contrary, Hubert Bennett the LCC Architect, in whose brain the design for the building originated, said that it was "impossible" to ask him to accept it, because no guarantee could be given that his walkway would ever link up to anything else. The LCC could give no guarantee because the next developer, J. Lyons and Co Ltd, the owners of the Trocadero site in Shaftesbury Avenue, who wish to build a hotel, have also rejected the idea of upper level walkways. It is Cotton and Joe Lyons, not the LCC, who plan the Piccadilly of the future.

Nobody claims that upper level walkways are the only possible solution. They may not even be the best solution. But it is certain that the problem cannot be solved without public ownership of the land, the preparation of a comprehensive development plan and a new layout to which all buildings must conform, and the careful timing of rebuilding, so that the new system grows logically and not in a series of disconnected and useless bits and pieces. If it pays Jack Cotton to develop, it would pay the LCC.

There is no doubt that much of the West End is going to be rebuilt. The only question is whether it is to be redeveloped comprehensively through public ownership of the land, or piecemeal by private owners who 'negotiate' with the LCC. There are a number of sites, along almost the whole of Shaftesbury Avenue, for which applications have already been made by developers. Two applications have already been granted in outline. Some of the developers have amalgamated a number of smaller sites into one large one. But even so the result is still piecemeal development and the pattern will be basically unchanged, apart from widening Shaftesbury Avenue by about 12 feet on the southern side. Could one imagine a more trivial solution for the traffic problem than that? No matter how fine the architecture of the individual buildings may be (and some architects working for speculative developers have produced fine buildings, even if most of them have not) the demand for lettable floor space and advertising space, the vanity of developers for 'prestige' buildings, can only lead in the absence of a plan to the chaotic sprouting of skyscrapers on sites far too small for the planning problems to be resolved.

On the Monico site the LCC has allowed a big increase in office population (contrary to its own declared policy). It has allowed the developer to exceed the maximum permitted floor area (by allowing him to include, for the purposes of calculating it, more than 5,000 square feet that he has sold to the LCC for road widening) and it has allowed him to provide garage

space in another building, on the other side of Denman Street. This is not only unsatisfactory in itself, but prevents the ultimate redevelopment of the block on which the garage stands. The Monico site is, in fact, too small and too awkward to be developed by itself.

But then the object of the developer is not to produce good architecture or to satisfy the public's needs for beauty, comfort or anything else. Jack Cotton's counsel, Ramsay Willis, QC, put the thing in a nutshell when he asked what sort of a building would be likely to arise if 45 members of the Architectural Association, who had signed a letter of protest, had their way.

"Is it going to be a noble building," he asked, "the creation (unhindered by the problems which hamper the site in our hands) of a top architect of high quality who will be allowed to have his memorial at Piccadilly Circus—a noble building, no doubt, but possibly one which no one would build because, as we know, this is a commercial site, and a commercial building is going on it."

## A "Commercial Site"

Yes, it is "a commercial site", and so is the greater part of London and of the other cities too. That's why there had to be a 155-ft. advertising hoarding, forerunner, no doubt, of even larger and brasher advertising towers sprouting all over London. The LCC, after all, has asked its officers to investigate the possibility of using a 23-storey block of LCC flats at Elephant and Castle for advertising signs.

The inquiry reinforces the demand for a clean up at County Hall. The right wing caucus of the LCC appeared at the inquiry hand-in-hand with Jack Cotton, inviting the Minister to approve his building, and exhibited a cowardly reluctance to fight for comprehensive planning or good architecture. The opposition was led by the Civic Trust (President, Duncan Sandys) and was confined to intellectuals. Although Elwyn Jones, MP, was the Civic Trust's counsel, and two Labour MP's supported the Trust's fight, there was not a single objector from the Labour or trade union movement. Must Labour be more reactionary than Duncan Sandys or Lord Conesford?

Piccadilly Circus, and the comparable situations to be found in other parts of London and in other cities, shows that planning (national, regional, local, economic), public ownership and Socialism, far from being irrelevant, are the keys to the solution of immensely difficult problems. Labour councils should shrug off their tame acceptance of the limitations placed upon them by Tory policies, and set their architects and planners to produce real solutions to these problems, and then launch a fight for the money and the powers to realise them instead of squandering the brains of their technicians on half-baked palliatives. They should try to use the comprehensive development procedure on a much bigger scale in Piccadilly and elsewhere, campaign for the restoration of planning grants and for capital loans at lower rates of interest, and for the right to do the profitable as well as unprofitable developments. All this is possible within the present system; it would

educate the people to the need for more profound changes by giving them glimpses of what could be done and exposing the difficulties in the way.

The Labour Party Conference has not discussed town planning since the war. It did not figure in its election programme. It has no fresh ideas about it. It is doing no research into it. Yet here, in the reconstruction of the cities, lies one of Labour's greatest opportunities. It is impossible for a Tory Government, the landowners and the speculative developers, with money as their god and profit as their motive, to create fine cities out of the present chaos. We need Socialism to do that. But we also need a lot of hard thinking. How is urban land to be nationalised as I believe it should be? What compensation should be paid? How are land values to be deflated? How is the motor industry to be brought within the ambit of a nationally planned transport system? How is the car to be used inside cities, so that we can take advantage of its convenience without being held up by its inconvenience? These and other such questions should be appearing on the agendas of the Labour Party, and of the New Left too, for they are part of what Socialism is about in the 1960's.

*We are full of confectionery and short of hospitals; loaded with cars and ludicrously short of decent roads; facing an educational challenge of major proportions, yet continuing a limited class system of schools. These are incidental examples of a crisis which needs different analysis and different programmes from those appropriate to poverty and depression. That such analysis and such programmes must be socialist seems more clear than ever before. Only in projecting a new kind of community, a new kind of social consciousness, can the Labour Party offer anything distinctive and positive. It may take a long time, and some may be impatient for power and therefore restive. But, short of ruin or folly, this is the only way in which the Labour Party can now ever win, and it is not after all anything out of the tradition that is being offered: Labour came into existence, not as an alternative party to run this society, but as a means of making a different society. Experience teaches, and we may have to wait some time, though the present balance is in fact quite delicate and could very easily be disturbed. But, short or long, the use of the future is evident: basic analysis, basic education, basic democratic organisation.*

Raymond Williams, *Class And Voting In Britain. Monthly Review*. January, 1960.

## Forms

*These forms once so well controlled  
obedient always ready to receive  
the dead matter of poetry  
frightened by fire and the smell of blood  
have broken out and dispersed*

*they attack their creator  
tear him and drag him  
down endless streets  
through which have long since passed  
all orchestras schools church processions*

*the breathing meat  
filled with blood  
is still the food  
for these perfected forms*

*they press so close around their spoil  
that even silence does not penetrate  
outside*

December 1956

## The King

*He being all alone  
when they place before him  
a bowl of food  
purrs quivers*

*licks his chops*

*untied bag of bones*

*you are the lord of creation*

*—I tell him—*

*the lion focuses his gaze*

*when you stare*

*you are the lord of the world*

*you are Socrates Caesar*

*Columbus Shakespeare*

*you composed a sonnet split the atom*

*built crematoria*

*raised Notre Dame Cathedral*

*you have opened the snouts*

*of stone gargoyles*

*don't mind that now*

*they laugh*

*at me at you*

*he runs away*

*a bone in his jaws*

*I run after him call*

*you are the lord of creation*

*king and cathedral*

1957

## Meeting

*I meet the dead more and more often  
they are strangely animated  
their mouths open they talk a lot  
some of them foam  
like soap*

*recently I came across a largish group of the dead  
who sat in rows on seats  
their cheeks rosy  
they laughed clapped sat down  
were indignant stood up  
made personal remarks*

*among the old corpses  
bustled the young  
they do not know  
they are scatter-brained  
move their arms and legs  
drive cars embrace new  
causes and still warm wives*

*there was one experienced deceased  
who kept winking at me  
roguishly  
and even tried  
to be reborn  
in the eyes of the assembled*

November 1956  
(at the Writers' Congress in Warsaw)

# Four Polish Poems

Tadeusz Rozewicz

## ***In The Midst of Life***

*After the end of the world  
after death  
I discovered myself in the midst of life  
I was creating myself  
I was building life  
people animals landscapes  
this is a table I would say  
this is a table  
on the table lie bread and knife  
knife serves to cut bread  
people feed on bread  
man must be loved  
I learnt by night by day  
what to love  
I would reply man  
this is a window I would say  
this is a window  
beyond the window there is a garden  
in the garden I see an apple tree  
the apple tree blossoms  
the blossoms fall  
fruit is formed  
ripens  
my father picks the apple  
the man who picks the apple  
is my father*

translation: Adam Czerniawski

*I sat on the threshold  
that old woman who  
pulls a goat on a string  
is needed more  
is worth more  
than the seven wonders of the world  
anyone who thinks and feels  
that she is unwanted  
is a murderer  
this is man  
this is a tree this bread  
people feed to live  
I repeated to myself  
human life is important  
human life has great importance  
the value of life  
is greater than the value of all things  
which man has created  
man is a great treasure  
I repeated doggedly  
this is water I would say  
I stroked the waves with my hand  
and conversed with the river  
water I would say  
good water  
this is me  
man spoke to water  
spoke to the moon  
to the flowers and rain  
spoke to the earth  
to the birds  
to the sky  
the sky was silent  
the earth was silent  
and if a voice was heard  
flowing  
from earth water and sky  
it was a voice of another man*

1955

Tadeusz Różewicz was born in 1921. During the war he fought in the Resistance, and when it ended he went to study History of Art at Cracow University. His *Collected Poems* appeared in 1957, ten years after his first volume. He is certainly the most important poet who began to publish immediately after the war. Writing about his latest volume, *Forms*, in *Twórczość* (the leading literary monthly) a reviewer defined the poetry as follows: "Różewicz's world consists . . . of splinters and fragments which, freed from the pressure of wholes, lead an independent existence . . ."

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# BEYOND THE

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ECONOMIC BOYCOTT has been used increasingly in the last few years as an instrument of political struggle in Africa; in Northern Rhodesia, some years ago, Africans boycotted traders who operated separate counters for Africans, and won their battle; TANU in Tanganyika ran a successful boycott of European beers last year; and the same technique has been used in Kenya, Uganda, and in West Africa, to gain limited objectives. But in these territories, it has been employed as only one weapon among others open to use by Africans in their struggle for independence—in South Africa it is being developed to a far greater extent into a main technique of struggle, for other methods are largely illegal or impossible.

To understand the great stress being laid on boycott as a possible revolutionary weapon in South Africa, it is necessary to know something of the economic basis of the African's dilemma: South Africa's economy depends on the mining industry, upon the expanding secondary (monthly export) industries that have grown up since the war, and upon agriculture, which also feeds the export trade (fresh fruit, and canned food of all kinds, wool, hides, skins, and wines). All these enterprises are white-controlled, and all of them need labour. Long ago, a steady flow of labour was 'encouraged' by the allocation of a mere 13 per cent of the land for African use, so that large numbers of young men would be forced to seek work in 'white' areas in order to keep themselves and their families. But they were discouraged from settling down in the towns, to form a stable and potentially threatening working class, by the pass laws, under which all Africans outside the reserves must carry on them *at all times* an identification document, a permit to seek work, a permit to work in an urban area, a permit to be in an urban area and be out after dark, etc. The pass laws are used, in fact, to divert African labour to the least popular and least paid jobs—on the farms, particularly, and in the mines.

The Nationalist government has gone to endless trouble to intensify this system which denies to the non-white worker the elementary liberty of choosing where and at what he will work. Africans are not defined as employees under the Industrial Conciliation Acts, so they have no right to form trade unions, to negotiate on wages and working conditions, or to strike. Every strike by Africans in South Africa is an illegal one, and may therefore be broken by force. The government has gone further. It has allocated specific jobs for Europeans only, and retains the power to declare any job the preserve of any one racial group.

Industrial action to improve conditions is therefore

impossible; and the conditions themselves are disastrous. Political action is no more open to non-whites—the few, inadequate, white representatives in Parliament for Africans are having their seats abolished; extra-parliamentary opposition through the mass organisations of the people—the congresses and the unofficial trade unions—leads to the banishment or banning of leaders, and the treason trial. Demonstrations, petitions, are ignored, if they are not broken up by police violence. Lately, rioting has been the result of increasing frustration among the African people: families are being broken up, homes broken down, under the group areas laws, whereby whole populations must move from their shanty towns in the cities to government estates far from work, and where often enough wives and families are either not allowed, or are allowed only if the marriage has taken place under recognised law—which is frequently not so, as customary unions are common in the insecure life of the townships.

What are the alternatives left open? Only the continuation of the present situation (which leads to violence anyway), violent revolution, or boycott. Another way was tried in 1952—passive resistance to unjust laws, when thousands of people went to gaol in an organised campaign of defiance; but the penalties imposed by the government were so severe that the campaign was crushed. But boycott is not illegal; what is more, even if it were illegal, how to force people to buy what they do not want to buy? It is a method of struggle of all methods most difficult to identify, and therefore to obstruct.

Already, several considerable victories have been won through boycott. One large canning firm agreed to recognise the African Union at the threat of boycott; another firm reinstated eight victimised workers immediately after boycott of its products was suggested. The value in terms of morale of such victories for those struggling against apartheid is hard to overestimate, in a situation as desperate as South Africa's; but what is perhaps more significant is that the firms who have made concessions have made them *against* the advice of Nationalist newspapers, and against the policy of the government. This is perhaps something of an answer to those who claim that an international boycott will only harden the attitudes of white South Africans, and unite them in support of the government.

Congress first expressed the hope that international support for the economic boycott would be forthcoming when first it was launched in April, 1959. In Britain the Committee of African Organisations, supported by

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# BOYCOTT • • • *Rosalynde Ainslie*

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the Movement for Colonial Freedom, responded at once, and after some months of campaigning the movement became the national one it is at the time of writing, supported by the Labour and Liberal Parties, and the T.U.C. and run by local organisations throughout the country. There is good reason to suppose that it will be the most successful campaign ever run in this country in support of the non-white peoples of South Africa.

But it would not be the national issue it is, if it had not provoked serious opposition among interested persons, and serious doubts among disinterested ones. Some of the arguments against the international boycott should be examined as seriously and as often as possible. And the aims, limitations and possibilities in such a campaign need some clarification.

Those in the Union who support the campaign see in the international campaign not only the elimination of the possibility of dumping goods boycotted at home on export markets; but a real reinforcement of the limited economic power of the South African masses. International action can help to put pressure on the South African government to change its policies—it can sharpen the weapon in the hands of the South Africa opposition. And it can do more. It can demonstrate effectively, to the South African people as much as the South African government, that the peoples of the world are not prepared to stand by inactive while the Nationalist government does exactly as it pleases with eleven million human beings.

It would be foolish, of course, to suggest that a one-month intensified period in Britain this March will do anything more than draw attention to the possibilities inherent in the idea of international boycott. The space given to the boycott in the South African press is some indication already of the extent to which those in power are already worried: the British Boycott movement makes regular front-page stories; the Labour Party and other organisations supporting the boycott, are treated to frequent editorial diatribes; but even if the one-month this March campaign gains maximum support, it can only affect some £6 million worth of South Africa's total export of over £300 million annually. A drop of £6 million would be dramatic—but it could hardly be expected to produce an immediate change in government policy. The most important effect of the campaign will be its demonstration of solidarity with the South African opposition, and the education of public opinion in this country.

However, an international boycott, with support all over the world, would be another matter. South

Africa's economy depends upon export, and a considerable part of this export (excluding gold) is unidentifiable consumer goods. One-third of the total export comes to Britain, and of the rest the Central African Federation, Kenya, other African countries, the United States, West Germany, France and Belgium, are the main importers. There is every reason to suppose that African countries will soon be ready to take the lead in instigating boycotts on a world-wide scale. The ICFTU has already supported the plan for consumer boycotts, and asked its constituent Trade Union organisations to consider the possibility of industrial action. And a consumer boycott in the countries mentioned above, alone, would be enough to force the South African establishment to take a great deal of notice. Industrial action has already been promised in Cyprus. It may well spread in Africa at least.

International action would, of course, make South African retaliation (a considerable fear in the minds of some would-be supporters) impossible. It is already unlikely, for an official refusal to buy British goods would provoke more retaliation, in its turn, than it would be worth. South Africa cannot at present afford to lose Commonwealth preferences. And as for an unofficial move away from British imports, this has already largely taken place, over the last few years, as figures for the import of British cars for South Africa, and a recent report from GEC, for instance, show. This trend would continue to some extent, quite independent of the boycott—South Africa is turning to Japan, Germany and Italy for electrical goods, cameras, motor cars.

The third main objection to the boycott voiced in this country, and echoed vociferously from interested parties in South Africa, has been that non-whites themselves will suffer. Chief Luthuli himself, in a recent interview, recognised that this was likely. But he asked friends overseas not to be taken in by this argument (it is therefore all the more unfortunate that the Co-operative Union should have been), for, he said, the people know this. But they know also that every people struggling for its freedom has had to suffer, and the people of South Africa choose to suffer in this way, rather than to continue suffering under apartheid.

One last point is perhaps worth noting. This boycott is supported, and has actually been called for, by a responsible and multi-racial opposition in South Africa (white liberals as much as non-whites support it). It has actually been asked for from within the country, so the question of whether one should boycott all countries whose governments we disapprove, does not arise.

## Jean-Paul Sartre

ONLY SIX months ago, only yesterday, one asked: "What will he do?" Provisionally torn by contradictions which must be respected, he had chosen silence. But he was one of those rare beings for whom one may well wait, because they choose slowly and remain faithful to their choice. One day he would speak. We would not even have dared to venture a guess as to what he would say. But we thought that he, like the rest of us, was changing as the world was changing: that was enough for his presence to remain alive.

We had quarrelled, he and I. But a quarrel, even if you never see someone again, is nothing, nothing more than a different way of living *together*, without losing contact, in the narrow little world which is given us. It did not stop me from thinking of him, from being aware of his eye on the page of the book or the newspaper he was reading, and from asking myself: "What does he think of it? What does he think of it *at this moment*?"

Sometimes, according to events or my moods, I thought his silence too cautious, and sometimes I found it painful. But that silence was part of the quality of each day, like heat or light, only *human*. One lived with or against his ideas, as they were revealed to us in his books—*La Chute*, in particular, perhaps the most beautiful of his books and the least understood—but always through his ideas. They were a strange adventure of our culture, a movement whose phases and final outcome one tried to guess.

He was in this century, and against history, the true heir of that long line of moralists whose writings may well be that which is most original in French literature. His stubborn humanism, narrow and pure, austere and *sensuous*, fought a difficult battle against the overwhelming, confused events of our time. But, inversely, his was also a reaffirmation, at the core of our epoch, and because of the stubbornness of his denials, of the existence of the moral fact, against the Machiavellians, against the Golden Calf of realism.

### The Fact of Silence

He *was*, so to speak, that unshakeable affirmation. If one read or thought at all, one came up against the human values which he kept in his clenched fist: he questioned the political act. He had to be circumvented or fought: in short, he was indispensable to that tension which constitutes the life of the mind. Even his silence, these last years, had a positive facet: this cartesian of the absurd refused to leave the solid ground of morality and to tread the unsure paths of *praxis*. We guessed it and we guessed also the conflicts he

silenced: for morality, taken by itself, both demands rebellion and condemns it.

We waited because we had to wait and to know. Whatever he might in time have done or decided, Camus would never have ceased to be one of the main forces of our cultural life or to represent in his way the history of France and of this century. But we might perhaps have known and understood his itinerary. He had done a life's work, and as always, everything remained to be done. He said it himself: "My work is before me." It's over now. What is particularly scandalous about his death is the abolition of the human order by the inhuman.

The human order is only a disorder still; it is unjust, precarious, people kill in it, and starve in it: but at least it is made, maintained, and fought for by men. It is in that order that Camus should have remained alive: that man on his way was a challenge to us, was himself a question seeking its answer; he lived *in the middle of a long life*; for us, for him, for the men who impose order and for those who refuse it, it was important that he should speak, that he should decide, that he should conclude. Others die old, others may die at any moment without thereby altering the meaning of their life, of life itself. But for us, unsure, without compass, it *mattered* that our best men should reach the end of the tunnel. Rarely has the nature of a writer's work and the circumstances of an historical moment so clearly demanded that a writer should live.

## Claude Roy

... CAMUS' GREATEST merit is to have asked and lived the questions which confront every one of us, to have probed the problems which are our problems, the dilemmas which tear us apart. It is not true that all our contemporaries are contemporary. Neither is it true that topicality is sufficient to determine whether a writer is contemporary. *L'Etranger* was not a topical book, but it was more relevant to us than dozens of books which then seemed quite topical, yet which did not concern us at all. It is not enough to be born in a century to be a child of the century. But Camus was our contemporary; he was a child of our century.

The importance of Camus is to be measured by the sharpness of the controversies which opposed him to the best minds of our time. His long, and no doubt necessary, quarrel with communism, his polemics with Mauriac, with Sartre, with Breton, are almost as much a witness of Camus' stature as the brilliance of his most polished books. All men debate, but all men cannot price themselves on having only debated about the essentials. Camus did.

Most men are able to admit that there have been times when they have been wrong (though they much prefer not to). But only a very small number are willing to admit that others have been right (against them). Nothing moves me more about Camus than an admission



he made, three years after his controversy with Mauriac about the purge of collaborationists: "I have come to recognise within myself and wish to do so publicly here, that, on the essence and on the specific point of our dispute, M. Francois Mauriac was right against me." An excess of pride may blur one's vision, but the courage to be specific against oneself demands much pride. Camus often had it. When he wrote: "Could one start a party of those who are not sure that they are right? That would be my party", it seems to me that he had not only thought up a nice formula but that he constantly sought to act according to it. Who is there who always succeeds in doing that?

Yet, it must be said that, while he was almost always careful not to be 'in the right', in the sense in which people try to have the last word, Camus was a man who was very often and very essentially right. He was probably not a profoundly original thinker, a mind of the stature, today, of a Sartre or a Claude Lévy-Strauss. One can see at a glance what he owed to his acknowledged masters, to Nietzsche and Dostoyevsky, to Gide and Jean Grenier. But he was able to restore its original fire to simple truths which held him completely and to which one is always driven back. Platitudes often irritate people who are immersed. They call 'pure souls', with the furious contempt of inverted commas, those who stubbornly repeat that one must not kill in order to ensure a better life, that terror terrorises rather than reforms, that it is not the ends which pass verdict on the means, but (that it is) the means which pass verdict on the ends, that man is a moral animal and that bad ways never clear good paths.

## Rebels And Oppressors

I confess that I can't clearly see whether the attitude of withdrawal, of willed distance which Camus had come to choose was the result of an overwhelming lassitude, of noble patience, or of proud impatience. Everyone must be allowed the right to make mistakes; no one should be allowed to be of bad faith. Camus' good faith cannot, it seems to me, be questioned. But should not one allow even to 'pure souls' the right to be greatly discouraged, a right which death alone prevents from being a passing phase. Sometimes, Camus seems to me like someone who has so often preached in the desert that he finally says, "I have spoken, make what you will of my words, I shall now be silent;" and sometimes he seems to me like someone who, having sown, waits silently for the harvest to come.

Laugh if you will, but of the dilemmas which Camus posed, there is one which seems to me a false dilemma: "every revolutionary" he wrote in *L'Homme Révolté*, "ends as an oppressor or as a heretic." The silence,

probably as painful to him as it was to us, which Camus maintained in regard to the Algerian problem was perhaps the fruit, if not of his despair, at least of the hopelessness he felt about the dilemma which he perhaps saw too schematically.

Is it unreasonable, Utopian to perceive more and more clearly, a solution to this dilemma, which would be neither oppression nor scuttle? But this silence of Camus, which was painful, was it the silence of an understandable tiredness, or an awaiting of a day when would germinate a seed which he had without any doubt helped to sow?

And similarly, must one *either* be a revolutionary and therefore either oppressor or heretic, *or* must one renounce being a revolutionary? I well know that in the uncomfortable position in which Camus was since he had left the Communist Party, one comes to be simultaneously a sharp-shooter as well as everybody's target.

And yet—when the telephone rang to tell me that Camus was dead I was reading the terrible report of the Red Cross International Committee. But a few days before, I had also read in the same paper a piece of news from Moscow. A Soviet citizen, found guilty of propaganda against the régime, had been given a light sentence, which was commuted, and was entrusted to the surveillance of his workmates. The dynamic of terror is neither continuous nor irreversible. It is true that one swallow does not make a summer, but it is also true that a piece of news gives one some hope. Who would dare assert that the revolution, in the time of Krushchev, wears the same face as under Stalin? Is it naive to think of revolutionaries who, already, are no longer oppressors, and, already, no longer heretics?

We have not finished debating Camus, debating with Camus. One cannot read without pain the answer he gave two years' ago to the question "Do you feel that you have said all that you believe essential to say?" Camus replied, "I am forty-five and feel disturbingly alive."

## Claude Bourdet

THE UNDERGROUND newspaper *Combat*, and later, after the 21 August, 1944, the daily *Combat*, was really Camus. Many other talented journalists worked for it. But the whole team was influenced by Camus, and it was he who gave the paper its tone. On the other hand, I think it was *Combat* which began Camus' extraordinary reputation and which made him, as it made Mauriac and Sartre, more than a man of letters: it made him one of the most admired leaders of French intellectual youth.

I have often asked myself why Camus held such an attraction for so many people, and particularly for a

substantial number of young people. I was tempted to answer, as were many others, (for Camus annoyed many people) that he offered a proud and despairing vision of a very comfortable kind to an intellectual bourgeoisie—and especially to a young bourgeoisie—which likes to feel “committed”, so long as the commitment does not impinge too greatly.

... But to see Camus thus is to forget a great deal. First, that he went into the Resistance and was, despite his bad health, intensely active in it; this was rather rare for most of the great writers of our time, and in evident contradiction to a pessimistic doctrine generally leading to passivity. Secondly, to see Camus in this way is to forget a whole period when he was not only the driving force of a “committed” journal, but when he himself wrote truly *political* articles, denounced injustices, offered solutions, took his stand, not for some theoretical “good”, but for a “better” which took account of immediate circumstances. I am thinking, for instance, of those editorials of 1944–45, which dealt with relationships with the Communist Party, with the struggle against industrialists who were sabotaging the economic effort, with the need to defend the press born of the Resistance, with the economic policies of Plevin, with the necessity of the Franco-Russian alliance; and I am thinking also of the series of articles he wrote in May, 1945, and which were among the first in the French press to denounce repression in Algeria and set out the demands of the Algerian people.

Re-reading these articles, it is impossible not to be astonished by the contrast between this live, healthy, sometimes violent, political commitment, and the steady withdrawal, after 1947, from all political action. Yet this is not quite what I mean to say, for there are different periods in every man's life, and Camus might have had powerful reasons for changing his mode of life. What *is* strange is the contrast between the will to action and the refusal of all action, the justification of that refusal, its rationalisation which, as in *L'Homme Révolté*, (and despite the lucidity of its analyses), leads nowhere and finally exalts individual revolt as against any kind of revolution.

What happened to make the Camus of 1945 the Camus of 1951? the man who, throughout the Algerian war, remained silent, or almost? I cannot answer that question because I knew too little this Camus whom I should have liked to have known better. But I believe that Camus was of great enough stature for someone to try and resolve the enigma, one day. I think this the more necessary because the interest which so many people have in Camus is not due, to my mind, to his withdrawals and his silences. What gave *Combat* its public and its authority at the Liberation, was that it was committed without being of any party. Camus had been able to combine, in a style that was new in France, the passion of battle, respect for opponents, and independence towards friends. It was his humanity in the struggle, not the proud refusal to fight, which gave Camus his special aura.

I think that Camus threw himself into the Resistance as into a kind of miraculous venture that would transform everything. He was little prepared for long-term political action, nor had he known the internal divisions of the Resistance. As many others, he did not fully realise how big the task was, how slender the resources. In the beginning he identified himself and identified his paper with the official Resistance, the Resistance of the parties and the government. Little by little, Camus, ever more bitter, reflected his disillusion in the paper. Then came the paper's financial crisis and the split in its team between Gaullists and non-Gaullists, and Camus finally withdrew.

He withdrew, I believe, because he felt that the independent platform in which he had expressed the hopes which the official Resistance had disappointed, now seemed to him useless. His worsening health no doubt contributed to withdrawal; but it was also due, I believe, to an excess of fervour. He fought as long as he hoped, and once he couldn't hope for everything he ceased to hope at all. A man with his qualities of heart and mind then found it necessary to legitimise abstention, to find in Russian crimes and communist Machiavellianism reasons for refusing to make any kind of protests side by side with communists; and to invoke also the crimes of the “fellaga” as a reason for refusing to engage in the struggle for peace in Algeria—as if negotiation implied approbation, as if crimes had not been committed on both sides, as if our own Resistance had had perfectly clean hands.

So, Camus, without completely withdrawing from politics, came to the politics of “clean hands”. I want to condemn neither his intransigence nor the disappointed hopes which led him into this *impasse*, but I have often regretted that so much integrity should have culminated in this withdrawal. I cannot help feeling that if some of us who criticised him and were the butt of his attacks had tried to convince him, he might perhaps have understood that one must keep one's heart clean, but that one must not so carefully keep one's hands free from any impure contact, if one wishes to change something in this world.

It is also necessary to recall that, though in recent years Camus mainly attacked the left (and thereby was of some help to the right), his attacks partly stemmed from the fact that he had retained from his militant past a stubborn belief in the ultimate triumph of revolution. He did not do much towards that triumph and for this we often reproached him. But let there come a time when France will move towards socialism, through the crises and errors which are part of human endeavour, and it may be that Camus' warnings against the corruption of revolution will be useful to those who will face that threat, and who will have forgotten that there once existed a militant capitalism, a predatory colonialism, an army ready for civil war, and politicians obedient to all of them.

# Workers' Control In A Planned Economy

Michael Barratt Brown

The second of two articles on Yugoslavia

UP A broad beechwood staircase, past wall-high charts of output, profits and earnings, through the ante-chamber of the director's private secretary, I was led majestically by the Workers' Council chairman to the inner sanctum of the factory director himself. It might have been the managing director's office in any of Britain's great industrial corporations, with its beautiful timber panelling, board room table, heavy chairs and long line of windows looking over the whole layout of the works. What was different was that, in the absence of the director, the Workers' Council chairman, still in his white boiler suit, motioned me to a deep chair, ordered the secretary to bring brandies, coffee, fruit juices and hors d'oeuvres and lifted the switch of the director's intercom to command the central exchange to call the chairman of the management committee and a couple of department heads on the factory 'tannoy'. He behaved as if he owned the place—which in a manner he did; for, this was Jugoslaviya and the first of many industrial enterprises which I visited throughout July of 1959.

I had a long list of questions: Who owned the factory? for in Jugoslaviya, although most factories are owned by the town commune (borough council) some, for reasons of size and importance, may be owned by the larger district, republic or even federal authority. In this case the town was the owner, but because it was a large factory—over 4,000 workers—and the town had several communes (equivalent in size to our constituency divisions of about 50,000 population) a joint town committee took responsibility. Did they appoint the director of the factory? Well, yes, but appointment commissions have by law to have one third of their membership represented from the Workers' Council; so they had provided two members and the town three members. Did the Workers' Council have a veto on appointments? *De facto*—yes; but *de jure*—no! Could they sack the director? The Workers' Council could take such a matter up with the town committee and press it hard, if they wished. Had they tried? They hadn't had to—yet! Had the director come from inside the factory? No! He had been chosen from outside in a publicly advertised competition.

How was the Workers' Council elected? There was discussion in each of the departments, and lists were drawn up by the Trade Union and sometimes by groups of workers; there were always more names than seats; and then there was a secret ballot for the 85 places. About two thirds retired each year. There was no extra pay and meetings were after work hours, but since the first few years there had been no difficulty finding candidates. The work was interesting and important and helped you to 'improve yourself—an important

phrase this last one. What were the subjects dealt with by the Workers' Councils? First, the annual plan of the enterprise and the statement of accounts; second, the wages and salaries schedule set for the year; third, norms, labour productivity and rationalisation, fourth, production costs, quality and sales; then, labour relations, discipline, etc., safety and protection, education and training and finally the distribution of the profits.

What about the day to day running of the business? For this purpose the Workers' Council elected a Management Board of eleven members to work with the director, but this was of course primarily the director's responsibility. How often did the Council and the board meet? The Council met about six times a year and the board once a week, but the director would probably consult the chairman of the Management Board and even of the Works Council everyday. The director and heads of departments were of course *ex officio* members of the Board and always attended Council meetings. Board meetings were also out of hours, and members were unpaid and not permitted to serve for more than two consecutive years. How were heads of departments chosen and foremen and chargehands, etc? By the director, but in consultation with the management board. How would a worker take up a complaint against one of these? This had to be done first to his senior officer in the chain of command, and only if that failed through the workers' own representatives.

What sort of workers got on to the Council and Board—League members (in Jugoslaviya the only Party is the League of Communists), or the best technically qualified, or those with longest experience? About a third were League members; technical qualifications and experience were important, but the attempt was always made to get a balance of departments, skills, experience, youth, etc. The two-year term meant that new people were always coming on and very big efforts were made all the time to raise the qualifications of workers. Nearly half the workers still lived and worked part-time on their land as peasants. This well illustrates the early stage of Jugoslaviya's industrial revolution and emphasises the value of the experience of participation in management which the Workers' Council experiment provides.

Some part of the decisions on investment policy is taken right out of the hands of individual enterprises and centralised in a national plan. Nevertheless, some power is left behind; the enterprises in Jugoslaviya are independent of the central authority and cannot be ordered by any state authority in an administrative manner. They can only be made to comply with the

laws of the country. This is a crucial point. I had obtained the impression before I went to Jugoslavlja this summer that, apart from consultation in preparing the details of the national plan and a certain measure of administrative decentralisation—both of which were now shared by other East European workers—any other claims for the Yugoslav system of workers' control were more or less eye-wash. There were not wanting those who told me the same inside the country. "They used to issue orders; now they make laws. What's the difference?" asked one critic; and when I enquired whether the laws were not made by elected deputies, he snorted: "The deputies don't make the laws; they don't even understand them; it's the state secretaries in Belgrade who fix all that."

The range of business autonomy is not very wide: the rates of taxation which enterprises have to pay to local, district, republic and federal funds are established, minimum investment funds for depreciation of fixed capital are laid down, minimum wages are guaranteed, prices of fuel, power and basic materials are centrally fixed, targets are set in the law of the Five Year Plan and the annual social plan, rates of interest are scaled according to different types of enterprise. It is only within such general limits as these that local committees, enterprises and Workers' Councils are free to make their own decisions and that a free market operates. Moreover, when considering the autonomy of a particular business, the powers of the owners—the local community—must not be forgotten. Once they have appointed a director, their immediate authority ends; but they retain the right to be consulted, to advise and to recommend. They are the local planning authority and have to give their permission for extensions on to new lands either of the factory itself and its ancillary

services—water, power, drainage, etc.—or of workers housing and recreational facilities. This is, of course, one of the main advantages of the system—that industry is developed as an integral part of the whole community.

To get a clearer impression of the extent of the decisions made by Workers' Councils, it will be best to examine the way in which the profits of an enterprise are determined and distributed. This is a complicated affair and it was explained to me generally with the aid of the wall charts that were used to make it clear to the workers themselves. I will try to reproduce one of these: (I might add in passing that the workers to whom I spoke, as I went round factories and mines and power stations, seemed to have a pretty fair grasp of the distinction between gross profit, net profit and 'clear profit!')

At the beginning of the year wages and salaries schedules had been worked out to provide minimum guaranteed personal incomes which amounted to 616 million Dinars. Thus by assigning themselves 670 million Dinars, they were in effect giving themselves one extra month's wages above the minimum. I found that, when asking workers what wages they had received in the previous year, they would usually reply rather cryptically: "Fourteen months!" or "Fifteen months!" This is the explanation. (See Table 2.)

The figures given here are, of course, for the whole enterprise; but detailed costings would also be available for each department, and the extra income earned would not be equally distributed *pro rata* to every worker, but would be distributed according to the contribution to profits of particular departments, with bonuses also to groups of workers and individuals, who were responsible for innovations and other increases in

## DISTRIBUTION OF INCOME OF A MANUFACTURING ENTERPRISE IN JUGOSLAVIA

Items	Value (million Dinars)*	As % of Receipts	As % of Net Profit	As % of Clear Profit
Total Receipts . . . . .	6,280	100		
Cost of Materials . . . . .	2,160	34.4		
Overheads—Amortisation. . . . .	205	3.3		
Other charges . . . . .	836	13.3		
Turnover Tax . . . . .	353	5.6		
Total Expenditure . . . . .	3,554	55.6		
Net Profit . . . . .	2,726	43.4	100	
Contributions to Social Needs . . . . .	1,300	20.7	47.7	
Clear Profit . . . . .	1,426	22.7	52.3	100
assigned to: Personal Incomes . . . . .	1,155	18.3		81.1
Reserve Fund . . . . .	93	1.5		6.6
Capital Assets Fund . . . . .	130	2.1		9.1
Social Welfare Fund . . . . .	45	0.7		3.2

\* Note: for million Dinars read £'000s to get a rough approximation.

productivity. Where increased earnings are the result of outside factors—a rise in sales' prices (due to monopoly, world price movements or State fixing) or a fall in material prices (for the same reasons)—the whole of the extra profit has to be assigned to the Reserve Fund. Moreover, there is a scale fixed by law of the minimum assignments to the Reserve Fund in accordance with the size of the clear income relative to the minimum guaranteed personal incomes.

## The Social Plan

It will be clear from these figures that the freedom of the workers to decide how much of the income of their enterprise shall go into their personal remuneration, how much to social welfare, housing, recreational facilities, etc. and how much to reserve—is pretty severely restricted. What remains is probably enough, however, to provide important work-incentives as well as the all-important interest in running businesses efficiently. It will also be clear that the sums taken from industry for the needs of the community are very considerable. The total of the Turnover Tax, the Contribution to Social needs and the deductions from personal incomes in the example given above amounted to over 2,100 million Dinars, or two-thirds of the Gross Profits (i.e. Total Receipts less cost of materials), and three times the net personal incomes drawn by all the workers in the enterprise. This emphasises the extreme importance of the social plan in determining both the rate and the areas of investment.

The Five Year Plan has the force of a law passed by Parliament, and is based on plans submitted from enterprises, localities and republics and co-ordinated by the state secretariats. It sets general targets for matching the output of different sectors of the economy and lays down detailed plans for that proportion (about a third) of the total gross investment of the country which is centralised. This third provides the federal government with the main means of redistributing the wealth of the more advanced parts of the country to the less developed. When the Plan is being considered in Parliament, the 70 deputies who are not subject to general election but are chosen by the Assemblies of the republics—ten from each plus six from the Vojvodina and four from Kos-met—meet together separately as a Council of Nationalities. This is to ensure that the voice of the minorities and of the smaller nationalities in the federation is heard, when decisions are being reached about the priorities of investment projects.

In addition to the Five Year Plan, there is a short

### 2. DEDUCTIONS FROM PERSONAL INCOMES

To the budget	...	...	11%
To Social Insurance	...	...	24%
To House Building Fund	...	...	7%
<b>TOTAL DEDUCTIONS</b>	...	42%	= 485,000,000 D
leaving Net Personal Income	...	58%	= 670,000,000 D

term social plan prepared each year for the Federation as a whole, for the republics, for the districts and communes and for every enterprise. In these plans the volume and structure of production and the distribution of income is laid down. Where new enterprises have to be established, the site is determined on purely economic grounds (unless special funds have been set aside by the federal government for development in one of the less developed areas) by a commission of the National Bank, as a result of an open competition for tenders from interested communes. The Plan, except in the case of underdeveloped areas, does not determine where development shall take place, but only how much of different kinds of development there shall be in the country at large.

The Plan is only a small part of the very considerable powers that remain in the hands of the central government, even after the successive measures of decentralisation of 1950 and 1952/3. Local authorities and individual enterprises are free to act within the law, and the market is free for producers and consumers to operate within the law—but the law allows for regulations by the bankers and economic planners. In their magnificent new building across the Sava in New Belgrade the state secretariats of the Federal Administration have power to advise, inspect and co-ordinate.

## State Intervention and the Free Market

After the Plan, the main weapon of the Government is financial. Taxation is designed not only to yield revenue, but as elsewhere to redistribute incomes (income taxes). There are also monopoly taxes and a tax on rent (after Ricardo) levied on enterprises enjoying special advantages of site. In addition, there is the important Turnover Tax, which is used both to hold back the production of consumer goods and generally to regulate demand and supply of goods. While I was in the country the tax on cigarette production was 75 per cent and on the production of building materials—nil. Two further weapons of control lie in the hands of the Government—the variation of foreign exchange rates and the fixing of basic material and power prices. There are three main rates of exchange:—for capital goods—800 dinars to the £; for tourists 950 and for consumer goods 1,800. Furthermore, enterprises which achieve good export results are permitted to keep a certain proportion of the foreign exchange for purchases of equipment, for foreign travel, including travel for business and study purposes, and for imports of foreign goods—motor cars and other consumer durables. The fixing of fuel, power and basic material prices by the Government is used both as a general control over the economy and as a further means of regulating supply and demand.

The remaining key economic weapon is the control of bank credit. The banks charge different rates of interest for different types of enterprise—varying from nil to local authorities, through 1 per cent for housing

and 2 per cent for agriculture to 10 per cent for hydro-electric undertakings. Similarly repayment periods vary from one to thirty years.

All enterprises are affiliated to Chambers of Trade and Industry which provide important upward pressure groups meeting the downward pressure of state intervention. Indeed, the association of electrical power producers itself co-ordinates the output of power from different stations, employs the 'dispatchers' who feed the grid and levies fines for station failures and gives bonuses for successes. In these Chambers the best brains in each sector of the economy meet and bring their local and individual knowledge to the solution of national problems.

The principle of workers' or social control is not confined to productive enterprises alone. Every branch of the economy—transport and services; local, republic and federal offices; schools, health and cultural institutions are considered as enterprises and have their own measure of autonomy to run their own affairs within the law, within their budgets or earnings and within their own frontiers of reference. Schools, sanatoria, cinemas and radio stations have all alike to pay their way whether from earnings or social insurance funds or from taxes. Everyone becomes as a result extremely money conscious and anxious to increase revenue and avoid waste. This is mainly a good thing, but there are some surprising results, as when a hospital keeps its beds full to maintain its receipts from the social insurance fund. It would be idle to pretend that the system is always efficient.

The most exciting aspect of this development is the establishment of housing communities run by the tenants themselves, with their schools, parks, playing grounds, shops, restaurants, creches, etc. all under their control. Nothing shows the system to better advantage.

The other main sector of the economy, agriculture, is still, since the first abortive collectivisation, in private hands. There are a few hundred state farms and a few hundred 'work co-operatives' (collectives) and two and a half million peasant holdings, averaging four hectares (10 acres) each. The great majority of these peasants are, however, now members of 'general agricultural co-operatives'. They run the co-operatives through a Council and management board as in the factories. These co-operatives market the peasants' produce and buy seeds and fertiliser, tools and equipment, which they hire out to their members. They advise on techniques, arrange courses and increasingly co-ordinate and organise production, even here and there to the extent of breaking down the boundaries of the individual holdings to achieve more efficient large scale farming. Slowly the peasants are learning that they must co-operate together if they are to raise their earnings; but the process is very slow and in the meantime there can be little doubt that their inefficiency is being feather-bedded by the rest of the community, as it is with farmers in other parts of the world.

## Conclusions

From this almost entirely descriptive article readers will draw their own conclusions. What has so far been left out is the omni-present guiding role of the League of Communists, which holds the monopoly of political power. Marshal Tito in his speech to the Central Committee last November felt it necessary once again to "tighten party discipline and restore centralism to all party activity" (*Times* report November 24, 1959). There can be no doubt that the League fractions in government, industry and agriculture and in cultural affairs make the main decisions and get their way. And these men and women are the main recipients of the privileges, 'the New Class' of managers, whom Tito in the same speech once more so strongly censured for abusing their position. But if we wag our heads over this, we need to remember that Yugoslavia is a backward Balkan country, carrying through one of the most ruthless processes in man's history—an industrial revolution. And if the 750,000 League members are enjoying power and privilege, this is at least ten times as many as ever enjoyed these things before the war. Moreover, it was my impression that there were many thousand non-communists sharing this power and sharing some of the privileges as members of Councils and committees in industry, agriculture and government. The Yugoslavs claim that a tenth of the population takes some part in the management of their lives. If this is true, it is probably unique in any country in the world.

Not enough has been said here on the role of the Trade Unions. Yet the most valuable lesson that the Yugoslavs have to teach us, in preparing to build socialism in a more advanced industrial country, is that there is no contradiction, or rather that there is a dialectical and valuable contradiction, in the workers electing some of their fellows to manage their affairs and others to watch the managers. For whatever mistakes were made at the first flush of enthusiasm, it is clear that the Yugoslav Trade Unions have settled down to their universal role of watch-dog for the workers. It is they who collected the ammunition for the Marshal to fire at the managers; it is they who have fought for wage increases, especially in the non-productive sector of the economy; it is they who have kept the differential ratio between manager and floor-sweeper at 1 to 5. This does not include all the perks and expenses of office; but these exist in Britain too, with a ratio of 1 to 20.

The most important thing to say remains, that the system, and particularly the educational system, encourages the spreading, and not as under capitalism the narrowing, of power and responsibility, the increasing and not the lessening of participation and social consciousness. This would be remarkable anywhere; in the Balkans it is almost a miracle. There is much that we can learn already in our struggles, from the Yugoslav experiment, from the decentralisation of authority, from the emphasis on self-government, from the success of ordinary workers in mastering the arts of management.

# Never The General's Fault

David Ross

"Algériens, je vous ai compris."  
"On ne complotte pas contre le Général de Gaulle"  
"Conspirateurs!"

*General de Gaulle, at various times.*

IT MUST have been almost a relief to General de Gaulle when he crashed his head through a pane of glass.

The occasion will be remembered. He was on one of his provincial tours and at Lens he leaned forward through a window to acknowledge cheering. Unfortunately, someone had forgotten to open the window. The General staggered back, crying out to his horrified courtiers: "Ce n'est rien, ce n'est rien." One sees his point. After spending the best part of two years banging his head up against a brick wall, trying with inadequate theories to get to grips with the 20th century, a pane of glass must have seemed little more hostile than a pillowcase.

But still, it couldn't have been pleasant and someone must have been to blame. It was the *Daily Express* which found the culprit. "The window-pane," it observed, "had been specially polished for the General's visit to Lens." So there it is. It was the special-polisher of Presidential windows who was at fault. And it is always that way. France may be in just the same mess as it was when the General seized power, but *he* is never at fault.

The same mess? Well, with one difference. When Algiers settlers staged a rising in January, there was no distinguished, retired General waiting to stab the Republic in the back. And Paris was more ready to compromise with the settlers. As soon as Massu had been sacked, the Government announced the resumption of the execution of Algerian prisoners. Four condemned men died next day. Paris had explained its arithmetic. One sacked General equals four murdered Moslems.

There were the other compromises in his crisis speech—the renewal of his refusal to negotiate with the FLN, the call to "wipe it out," the backing for "the most French solution" in Algeria and the promise that the Army would supervise a referendum. Against this, there was only his maintenance of the offer of "self-determination"—as phoney an offer as ever was counterfeited with trick phrases ambiguities and escape clauses sufficient to enslave the Algerians for a century. It was vanity, not principle, that made him stock to this.

And yet, and yet—analysis of his words proves nothing. One can read anything into them. It is events and not clever-clever talk that will decide because the events are bigger than this man.

Look at the one decisive action he did take. As the

crisis broke, he summoned Chaban-Delmas, the Speaker, to the Elysée. The General wanted more power. It was in no sense an Assembly crisis. Parliament was either quiescent or approving. But the General has one simple idea: when things go wrong, change the constitution. This was his idea in 1945; again when he led the RPF against the State; again in May 1958, and now in January 1960. The old soldier, groping for guidance, clings to the belief that "orders is orders". By changing the orders, one changes the facts. If one day the message is flashed to him: "Des bombes tombent à Paris," the telephone line from Colombey will reverberate as the deep voice booms: "Donnez-moi Chaban-Delmas. Il faut changer la constitution." And now France has seen, for no logical reason, all her liberties committed to the General's keeping; it is anyone's guess whether they will ever return.

As I write, the General is giving signs of at last doing what he should have done twenty months' ago: cleaning-up Algiers. But he didn't care before. The mutineers had not previously attacked *him*. And now he proceeds like a cautious crab, silencing Left-wing papers by "compensatory seizures" to placate the Right, but also attempting to re-assert authority in Algiers over those who put him in power. Watching him, one cannot help reflecting what might have been done by Fourth Republic politicians, if they had shown guts and leadership at the time of the first rising—and if the General had not lent his authority to the rising. Meanwhile, the war in Algeria continues and so does the torture which is essential to the victory which is always just around the corner. The offensive that will finally flush out the last guerillas from the Kabylie mountains ends after a few feverish communiqués. There are strikes, Ministers resign, the Assembly is in its customary uproar over State aid to schools. A wretched man with a police record named Pesquet is engaging in the usual preposterous Right-wing intrigue against the Left. Newspapers and magazines are being seized for reporting facts or commenting on them. At the UN, an overwhelming majority condemns the French for threatening to stage a nuclear test and a substantial majority criticises French policy in Algeria. Inside NATO, the French protest at being excluded from "the Anglo-Saxon directorate," and demand the right to decide when American nuclear weapons are used from French territory. They are snubbed twice for their pains.

But none of this is the General's fault. He has given France the constitution which, in his theory is the magic key to the resurrection of French glory, and if it fails to work, then someone else must be to blame.

So blame the Ministers. Blame the burden of the past. Blame those who defy him and those who defy him. Blame anyone you like, but never blame the General. His policy is never at fault. His failings do not exist. His theories must be right. His application of them is impeccable.

There has never been any secret about General de Gaulle's intentions. His ambiguity, the Delphic quality of his pronouncements, these are summoned only when his principles have to be applied to a situation which, in the damned annoying way of human matters, needs a practical solution. But on the broad issues, the Gaullist intention is summed up in one passage in the third volume of his *Memoirs*: "Though I put aside any idea of making myself a despot, I was nevertheless convinced that the nation needed a régime in which authority was strong and stable. Political parties are obviously unsuited to provide an authority of that kind." This was in 1945, and he duly left the Government because a non-party régime was not available to him, and set about establishing the party that was not a party—the Rally of the French People.

As to his attitude to himself: despite his rejection of himself as a despot, he had no false modesty. This is how *he* reports a visit in 1944 to Marseilles: "I must say that the appearance of General de Gaulle to speak to the crowds gathered in the Place de Mui, or moving along the Canebière, or being received at the town hall by the mayor, Gaston Defferre, caused a wave of popular loyalty which made all problems look easier." In these two passages from de Gaulle's own writing, we have our man and his intentions.

### "Le Coup D'Etat C'est Moi"

Educated by the Jesuits, trained in the army, innocent of free, civilian political life, it was natural to him, as it was to Hindenburg, to be impatient of the cautions imposed by liberty. If there is one thing that is really not his fault, it is his incapacity to understand what it means to exercise democracy. He has never known it and cannot grasp it for himself or accept it in others.

His RPF launched an assault on the State, and the key figures in that assault—Soustelle, Malraux and Debré, the intellectual—were later to be his Ministers. There is no reason to doubt that the General went to war, as Generals usually do, from the highest of motives. Those of us who saw something of the RPF in action in the late 40's will also bear witness that the General used, as Generals usually do, the roughest tactics in support of the good fight.

Alexander Werth has recorded the events in *France*, 1940–1955. "Every de Gaulle meeting," writes Werth, "now tended to assume the character of a para-military rally, with thousands of cars bringing supporters from distant parts and scores of armed men surrounding the General; at the de Gaulle rally at Grenoble in September (1948), there were serious disorders.

But then we are given the picture of the changed man: the spaniel-eyed General who retired in disgust from politics and settled down to write and meditate in Colombey, with two churches to make sure he didn't get it wrong, and resumed the battle only when his country cried out. It is forgotten that it was in September, 1957—*nine months before the Algiers rising*—that the General re-entered the scene, and from then until May 13, 1958, the press was filled with reports of his meetings with politicians, trade union leaders, financiers, diplomats and journalists. The plan for the seizure of power was well enough known, right down to President Coty's intervention which I forecast in *Tribune* that March (on the basis of information from a French official).

Yet we are asked to believe that a plot, led mainly by Gaullists and the army, calling from the first night for de Gaulle to return to power, following a period of unexpected political activity by the General, was nothing to do with its own logical outcome—the return of de Gaulle to power.

Is the General a fascist? The word has overtones, a flavour of abuse and even of treason about it. We do have, as uncontested evidence, the General's open hostility to party democracy, his avowal of authoritarian leadership, his autocratic constitution, his method of seizing power as the unreluctant hero of the colonials and the soldiers, his natural right-wing instincts. Against this, there is the fact that the parties do still exist—albeit on the General's sufferance, with no power and little influence, and even this existence can be ended at the drop of a beret. Indeed, at the turn of the year the General began contemplating the revision of his constitution because the Deputies were showing reluctance to pass his proposals for giving more State aid to Catholic schools and for cutting ex-Servicemen's pensions. The reluctance was overcome—but the General was worried that events might be carrying France back in the direction of democracy. The Deputies could not become a focus for resentment. The nation must get used to the idea that the Executive decides, the Deputies approve, and the people accept.

Nevertheless, the parties may yet provide a means of returning to democracy. So long as they exist, it would be an exaggeration to call France fascist; fascist-inclined is a more correct description. As to the General, I would call him fascist-minded.

The rumpus over economic policy is an interesting study in the conflict that underlines a fascist-inclined society. Basically, it was a clash between two Right-wingers, Pinay and Jeanneney. But it was also the first difference of interests between those businessmen who welcomed de Gaulle as a barrier against the Left and the more intellectual Right-wingers who saw de Gaulle as the pathway to glory. The General had to decide whether the State was to be run primarily for the benefit of business or business primarily for the benefit of the State. Jeanneney was pressing schemes for



workers to be represented (in a minority, of course) on boards of directors; for Sahara oil to be refined and distributed by a State concern; for State direction of investment to help backward areas; and for a pay rise for some State workers. Pinay resisted all these moves and fought for a cut in the price of State gas and electricity, to help private businessmen.

On all these issues, one's sympathies are with Jeanneney—and even on the political front, Pinay is no more democratic-minded than the Gaullists. Yet in no way is this a fundamental fight. Either way, society will be run for the benefit of private gain. The conflict between exploiters and exploited, between wages and profits, will continue.

De Gaulle's main contribution to gaiety in the financial field has been the devaluation of the franc. (The General *declared* that 100 francs should equal one heavy franc). He has crossed two noughts off prices and, as has been remarked, what used to cost 98 francs now costs one franc. Inflation goes ahead in centimes instead of in francs and only two people are reported to have committed suicide when they realised what had happened.

## Is The General "Neutral"?

What of foreign policy? "De Gaulle," a neutralist diplomat remarked to me, "is pursuing a policy that is not neutralism but exhibitionism."

Ever since 1945, there has been confusion about the General's attitude to foreign policy. Most people will, for instance, assert that he opposed German rearmament. This is not true. He opposed a European Army because it would absorb the French Army, but once Eden had produced a plan for a German national force, de Gaulle approved. De Gaulle's disagreements with the British and the Americans during the war were a straight fight between imperialist powers, without ideological merits. To dot the British in the eye, the General decorated Mihailovitch—and made friends with Moscow.

The General's 'neutralism' is not ours. He is not seeking to end the policy of rival military blocs with armoured fronts gnashing against one another. His concern is with giving France a more prominent role. He has made it clear that his influence is to be used to harden NATO's attitude, to refuse compromise and to increase tension. He has supported Dr. Adenauer in his intransigence, opposed an interim settlement for Berlin, was opposed to Macmillan's visit to Russia, is strongly opposed to disengagement and the ending of nuclear tests. He delayed the Summit, indulged his exhibitionism by insisting that it should be held in Paris, and has tried to get the agenda devoted to subjects on which agreement is unlikely—disarmament (a matter for technicians), East-West relations, interference in the internal affairs of other countries, free elections in East

Germany and, as low down the list as possible, a German settlement, with Berlin as an also-ran.

The removal from France of American nuclear bombers was not intended by the General as a contribution to a détente. On the contrary, he wanted the planes to stay provided he could have, ineffect, complete control of them. His own bomb is not a military weapon but rather an elaborate unwieldy, undeliverable contraption to force the Americans' hand.

How can we sum up our "greatest living genius"? His English admirers are numerous. Mr. Gaitskell, who praised the General's "moderation," had as usual hit the nail on the thumb. Mr. Crossman first put the case for de Gaulle and then attacked him, in fine Crossman style (his motto is: I disagree with Hugh, I disagree with Barbara, I disagree with myself). Edelman forecast, on the eve of May 13, that the General was "too old" to seize power; now he finds him just the right age for the job. Henry Fairlie showed that the attachment to democracy of the 'radical' Tories was only skin-deep. The British Embassy raced round after the coup to welcome back an old friend. Many journalists have allowed themselves to be over-awed, (indeed, apart from those committed on the Left, only two Paris correspondents have behaved in accordance with the highest traditions of democracy: Mr. Daniel Singer of *The Economist* and Mr. Thomas Cadet of the BBC).

For us, it should be possible to keep our principles and our sense of balance by tying these two ingredients of reason together—and adding a conception of the ridiculous.

Look hard at this man. You are looking at a failure—a failure on the grand scale, but still a failure. He has surrounded himself with absolute power on paper and has been almost impotent in practice. He has constructed a feudal court; he has commissioned Malraux to revive the Imperial Theatre; he schemes to get himself succeeded by the Comte de Paris, pretender to the French throne—a fitting succession. British royalty has been outdone: divorcees are banned not only from the family but also from the visiting list and even the staff at the Elysée. But what about reality?

To deal with that, the General goes off on provincial tours, the great arms reaching out to administer a majestic pat to a head here, a shake to a hand there. Tom Lehrer summed it up:

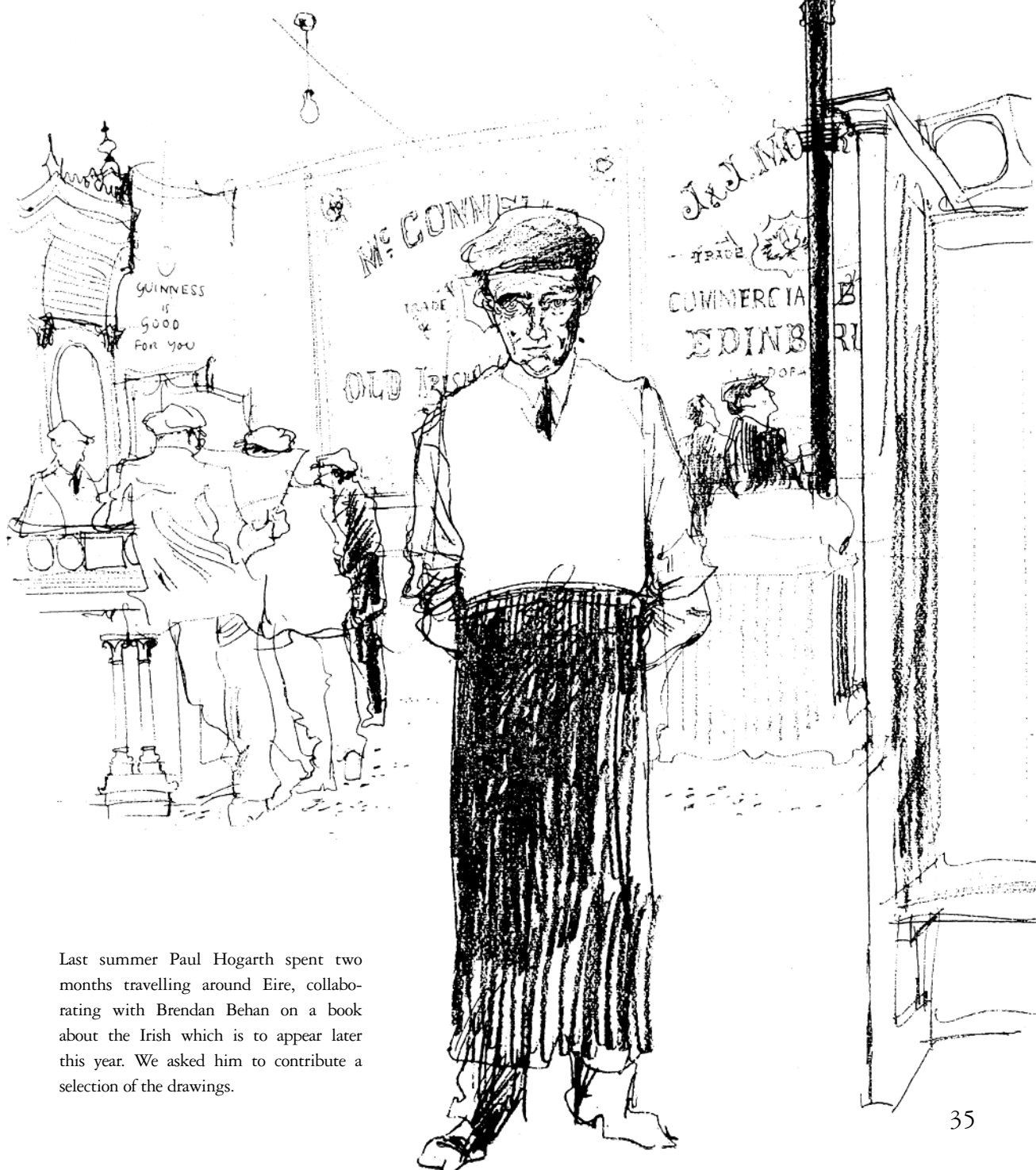
*Here's a cure for all your troubles,  
Here's an end to all distress,  
It's the old dope peddler,  
With his powdered happiness.*

"Everyone here had chosen Charles de Gaulle, in his heart as a refuge against his agony and the symbol of his hopes; so I must allow the man to be seen, familiar and fraternal, in order that national unity might shine forth."

So writes de Gaulle of de Gaulle.

Yes, Lippmann is right. There is only one way to describe him. Our greatest living genius has arrived.

# Paul Hogarth's Irish Sketchbook



Last summer Paul Hogarth spent two months travelling around Eire, collaborating with Brendan Behan on a book about the Irish which is to appear later this year. We asked him to contribute a selection of the drawings.





(Above) The Fates at Slattery's. Dublin is crowded with worn, heroic-faced women, the 'shawlies' who assemble like a tattered amazon legion of long ago in the snugs of the Liffey pubs and the nostalgic caverns of the Daisy Market. (Opposite left) In the heart of O'Casey's Dublin, children in St. George's Place off Mountjoy Square.



The only thing he would have against an artist, Brendan Behan (right) would say, would not be whether he was abstract or fughing realist but if he was fughing illiterate or teetotal.



In tense dour Belfast, the slogans of years gone were still a living legend. 'Remember the Battle of the Boyne' stood out starkly on gable-ends of grim but prosperous working-class homes in Orange Sandy Row. 'Honour Ireland's Dead: Remember 1916' replied the equally grim but not so prosperous walls in republican catholic Falls Road where our friend on page 1, Tommy Kelly works as barman at the *Bee Hive*.

2/4th Falls Road  
Belfast.

# The *Express* Families

Colin MacInnes

## A Study of the *Daily Express* Cartoons

THERE ARE three of them, of course: the Giles family, prosperous working-class; the Barry Appleby family, commercial petty-bourgeois; and the Osbert Lancaster family, displaced aristocratic. They've all appeared every day for years in cartoons in the *Daily Express*, and sometimes in the *Sunday Express* as well. First, just to refresh memories about them:

### *The Giles family*

The only one of the trio to which its artist has given his own name. They are twelve in number (or, by adoption—see below—thirteen), and there are *four* generations of them, namely: *Grandma* (in fact, as will be seen, *Great-Grandma*). Though treated with no deference whatever by the family, she is clearly well-loved, and not just tolerated. A survival from the distant Music Hall era, she embodies the robust virtues (and appalling nuisance-value) of the vanished, or vanishing, working-class matriach.

*Father* (who is *Grandma's* son) and *Mother*. Father must be at least in his sixties, since it appears he served in World War I (as well as II). His dress and habits are resolutely proletarian (shirt-sleeves indoors, pints of truant wallop with the lads, bawdy flirtations and fundamental loyalty to the home), and in character he is entirely insensitive and endlessly patient, though liable to outbursts of exasperated rage. Mother, his wife (from whom, even more than from *Grandma*, the children would seem to inherit their pig-like faces), is the massive, imperturbable, competent linchpin of the household. If one word exactly describes her, it is "Mum."

This pair have five children—three adult, two still juveniles. The older three are *George*, *Ann* and *Carol*. It is *George* who wears the meerschaum pipe and beret, apparently does no work at all, but instead (Giles's own words about him) 'reads everything, and that's about the lot for *George*.' *George* is, in fact, Giles's idea of a working-class highbrow. (In moments of stress, Father turns to the whisky bottle, *George* to gin.) He is married to *Vera*, his (Giles's words again) 'intellectual wife' who wilts and faints and doses herself with aspirin. *Ann* is the mother of 'the twins' (see below), and one may search the cartoons in vain to discover who was these children's father. (A nice, very accurate, Giles touch: my own guess is a wartime GI) *Carol*, who 'causes less trouble than the rest' (Giles again), personifies the] nice, common, plain, placid, mildly sexy, fag-dragginig English girl.

The two younger children of Father and Mother are *Ernie* and *Bridget*, little devils both, and really closer in age to the 'Giles babies' of the fourth generation, whose youthful uncle and aunt they would thus appear to be. This fourth generation consists of *George junior* (the son of *Vera* and *George*—and how, one may wonder, did their skinny love produce so tough a child?), and of *Ann's* two (illegitimate) children, 'the twins', called *Laurence* and *Ralph* after *Ann's* favourite actors.

To this little lot we must add item thirteen, that diabolical nipper with his hair dangling, like a prize puppy's, over his eyes, who sticks around with the family, clicking his infant news-ghoul's camera, but whose exact blood relationship to the rest (if any) I have not been able to trace.

### *The Barry Appleby family*

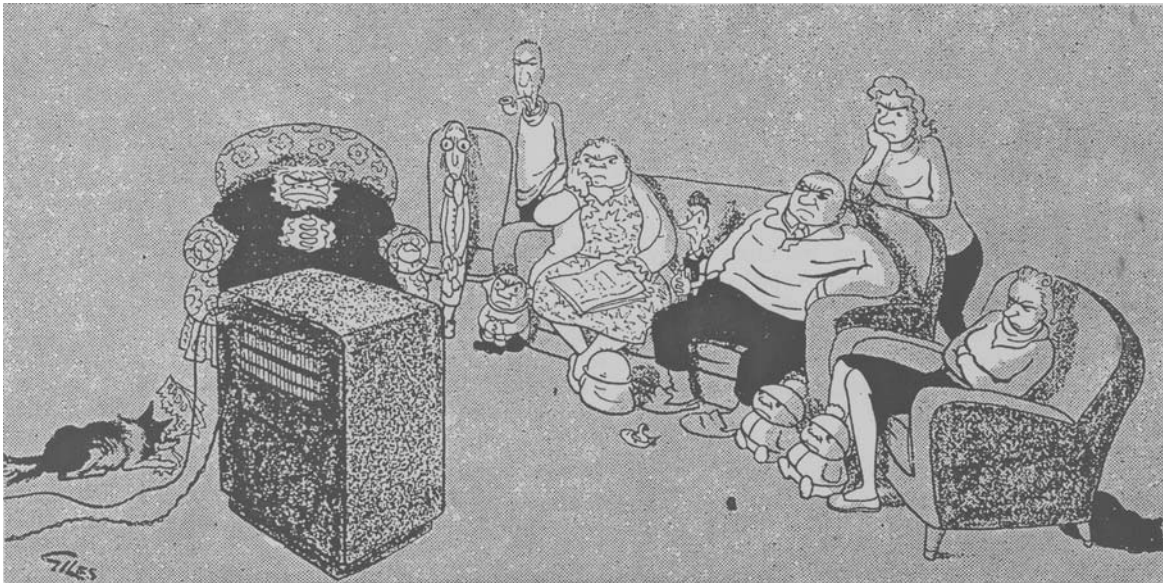
Only two here: *George* and *Gaye Gambol*, husband and wife—though their niece and nephew, *Miggy* and *Flivver* (cousins, apparently, and not brother and sister) pop up regularly in the cartoons. *George* and *Gaye*, in fact, are very resolutely childless: and when, for a while, a friend of *Gaye's* who went into hospital left her baby with *Gaye* to look after, great play was made with *George's* initial horror because, not knowing whose the baby was, he thought, for a fearful moment, it might be his wife's. *George's* (and even *Gaye's*) incompetence in baby-lore (*George* trying to 'change' the infant, for example) were also greatly emphasised.

### *The Osbert Lancaster family*

These are, of course, the *Littlehamptons*: Earl and Countess of, or *Maudie* and *Willy*. Their two children, girl (older) and boy (their names?), began as short-pant and skirt products, but made a sudden jump, a year or so ago, into adolescence—the only instance, I think, in all these three static sagas, of an admitted change of age. (And a very crafty and useful manoeuvre on the artist's part, because it then enabled him to satirise, from within, the 'teenage' and 'deb' phenomena).

\* \* \*

Before a more detailed analysis of these families is attempted, we may first ask ourselves what on earth all three of them are doing in the pages of the *Daily Express*? For while Giles's appeal would seem to be universal, and Barry Appleby has, as we shall see, an



almost fanatical but, I think, restricted following, the behaviour of the Osbert Lancaster quartette is probably too 'sophisticated' for the greater bulk of the *Express's* daily millions.

The first answer is that, ghastly though its whole 'ideology' may be (a mild adjective, but it will do), the *Express* is still, of all dailies, the one that casts its net widest and most efficiently to draw in contributors. The inspired recruitment of individualists like Low and Vicky to the sister *Evening Standard* is, of course, well known, and it's often forgotten that Giles himself was lured away from *Reynolds News*, where he (perhaps more appropriately) began. Appleby was, I think, an *Express* 'discovery', but the enlistment of Lancaster for his strategically placed (front page) but minute ('pocket cartoon') daily drawing, was a master-stroke. The fact is, that for pure *visual* 'presentation', the *Express* remains unbeatable; and their team of cartoonists (among whom I'd also like to praise their sports artist, Roy Ulyett—though, for our present purposes, he and his sparrow scarcely constitute a 'family') is the best there is by far today in England. As for the *text* which, in its accidental, accessory way, accompanies this galaxy of photographic and cartoonist talent in the *Express*, one can perhaps only say that its matter is so pre-digested and regurgitated, and its purely technical lay-out so unfailingly effective, that it constitutes a sort of visual appendage to the art work proper: and one of no intellectual content whatsoever.

The deeper answer as to why this particular trio has set up house in the pages of the paper, will be found more fully, I think, when our exploration of the 'families' is completed: and it is, in brief, that however varied the three groups may be, they are all, *fundamentally* (and despite, in some cases, surface "criticisms"

that are often apt and accurate, well-satisfied with our society *as it is*; and, even more important, that each of these families turns out, on close examination, to be essentially *consumers*, rather than *producers*: which is—one may judge I think quite fairly—exactly what the *Express* conceives its readership to be, and what it encourages it to be, at a time when, more than at any in our history, our very survival depends on stepping up production (both material and intellectual) at the quickest possible speed.

\* \* \*

Back then, for a moment, among the various bosoms of these three family circles. The first questions we may ask about them are, how rich are they, where does the money come from, and are they, in this respect, really characteristic of the three class groups they are supposed—more or less—to represent?

The Giles family, even by the new-working-class standards of the 1950's, is very well off indeed. Not only do they have all the home comforts and luxuries one might anticipate (and good luck to them!), but a car with caravan, a yacht, and holidays (all twelve of them!) abroad as well. Who earns all the money to pay for this? Not, one presumes, the five kids (though one wouldn't put it past them to be in on some juvenile racket), nor highbrowed George (as has been said), nor, surely, swooning Vera, nor even Mum, who's perpetually busy round the house, nor Ann (likewise with 'the twins'), nor, certainly, that obstinate old artful dodger, Grandma. That leaves Carol, of course, who's probably an earner and, above all, Father. What Father exactly *does*, I've not been able to discover: I imagine he's by now the owner of a biggish business (garage? contracting? haulage?) and, if so, not in fact, technically, 'working-

class' any more. One must visualise, at any rate, an annual income of *at least* about £3,000 (tax free—or fiddled). (This meant, by the way, that when Giles wanted to take a side-swipe at the *Express's* own 'woman's page' for recommending wildly expensive items to its readers, he had to set his satirical vignette in another, unidentifiable, household.)

The case of the Appleby family is even more mysterious. We know George is a prosperous salesman (though not of what), which might mean, with expense account and bonuses (both frequently referred to in the cartoons), a maximum of around £2,500 a year *before* tax (about which George and Gaye are almost neurotically conscientious). With this, although childless (just as well!), he is able to support a chronically extravagant wife, and his own extremely greedy self (both facts constantly emphasised), plus a home with all conceivable 'contemporary' luxuries ('model kitchen' for Gaye, telly, radiogram and portable, stereo, ciné, projector, motor-mower and so forth), plus a car (small-admittedly—and maybe 'on' the firm?), plus extensive gambling and frequent attendance at race-meetings (in a grey topper, which I just *don't* believe) both equestrian and speedway. Holidays, it is true, seem to be spent (judging by the décor) in England, though at 'posh' hotels, and there are frequent visits to equally 'posh' restaurants (*not*, presumably, on expense account, since George goes alone with Gaye) and innumerable taxi rides in any crisis.

The Lancaster family presents no problem: it's quite clear they're 'living on capital' (of which, in spite of their lamentations about death duties—and about high costs in general—there would still seem to be quite a store), and Willy, no doubt (though I don't think this is said specifically—and, indeed, would *any* city company take him on?), may have directorships. Their annual income—or rather, withdrawal—may be between £6,000 and £10,000 or more: it doesn't matter much which sum—just take your pick!

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Economically speaking, then, I don't think it's unjust to describe the worlds of these three families as those of fantasy. What, now, of their social conceptions—their ideologies, one might say? Here we must distinguish, I think, two aspects of 'reality': the accuracy of the three artists' visions of what English people do think about themselves, and the truth, if any, of these conceptions.

The Giles world is often praised—and in some ways, very rightly—for its realism. To consider him first, for a moment, as an *artist*, there is no one (and may I repeat, *no* one—no film director, no photographer, no painter) who has caught, as precisely and poetically as he has, and with such strength of wit, fantasy and sardonic-tender observation, the true aspect of the contemporary urban scene. (And—in his non-family cartoons—those of the nautical and agricultural scenes as well: to which, being himself a yachtsman and a

farmer, he can give a salted and a dung-like stench of truth!) No one, better than he, has evoked the dreamy desolation of our cities, the nightmare jumble of gas-works, warehouses, by-passes, docks and overhead railways—the cobbled perspectives of crumbling Victorian terraces, and the concrete austerities of the new 'garden' towns. None has seen more sharply than he the slums, the pubs, the derelict schools, the all-night caffs, the lock-up shops and alleys and backyards; and no one is better on our cities in rain, in fog or, especially, after dark. It is a real triumph of Giles's to be, as he is in this respect, an artist who, at a time when our culture is so dreadfully fragmented, can appeal at once to persons of every class, and of every degree and kind of 'culture'.

\* \* \*

One must also give Giles top marks for certain features of his social—and human—observation. The 'Giles baby' is an obvious example: "Fred's just heard the first cuckoo—and *got* it" epitomises his vision of the shameless, amoral, tirelessly energetic little Gengis Khans we all now (thanks greatly to him) recognise the dear little things to be. The care for the aged, as he depicts it—the automatic acceptance of their tedious presence—is equally true to traditional working-class social morality; though this instinct may be waning, so that soon these 'old folk' may be joining those of the petty-bourgeoisie and middle classes in the single back rooms and 'homes' into which our society—proud of its superior civilisation—banishes them as no 'primitive' African family would ever do. Among tough, horny-handed types in general he's hard to fault: though here an unpleasant aspect of his art emerges, which is his frantic adulation of the powerful—and chiefly of coppers (an adoration shared, one must admit, by most of his countrymen, though by no one else in their sense in the western world), of cigar-sucking, Rocky Marciano-type GI's (no wonder they're such fans of his at the bases!) and, in fact, of any 'practical' man who's hefty, domineering and a potential bully. (He's tiresomely fond, too, of paying not very oblique compliments to Prince Philip and Prince Charles—though the Queen herself is less, and much more tangentially, referred to.) He is excellent, also, on favourite butts of quite amiable satire—especially schoolmasters, doctors and nurses, guardsmen, railway-men, and their lugubrious places of occupation. Somewhat surprisingly, he's sympathetic (artistically speaking), too, when drawing whores, and he cracks down beautifully on minor hypocrisies (for instance, on that of a noted transatlantic evangelist about London park-life), or on idiocies (like that of the magistrate who told us recently that, in law, we have no right to *stand*, without moving, in any street).

But when we come to consider Giles's social outlook in general, we soon find there are wild inaccuracies of contemporary detail, and that fundamentally, he turns out to be an archaic romantic—wedged, psychologically, in much the same vanished and now idealised world as



that of the Crazy Gang: or, at any rate, in a world that has never progressed essentially beyond the Artlee, or 'Welfare' era of the 1940's. Types he fails completely to get right—and doesn't even try to—are his be-spatted, tea-swilling bureaucrats, baby-kissing politicians, lords soaking scotch in stately homes amid bebies of butlers, officers' messes filled with Crimean veterans (the sergeants' mess is quite another matter!), and colonial governors, bedecked with plumage, whose actual successors, though by no means less fatuous, are no longer so in this picturesque, engaging way. All these are merely caricatures; and when Giles's interest slips, so does his pen, and he draws hideously. For other social groups that don't really interest him, he devises stereotypes—though sometimes he catches up on visual reality with a time-lag of a year or so. Thus, he's not at his best on Teds or teenagers (he doesn't like either, and entirely misses the real horror of the one, and the real elegance of the other) or on their habitat (a Giles 'coffee bar' is far more terrible than any in reality), or on women's dress in general (unless it's squalid: if not, he exaggerates grotesquely). He's also (like so many English 'comic draughtsmen'—a rather nasty, masochistic trait) very ready to poke quite vicious 'fun' at artists, who are always presented as scruffy, pretentious 'bohemian' frauds. He doesn't much like (or try to 'understand') foreigners (though Frenchmen and Spaniards fare rather better than Germans or Italians—particularly Germans), and social outcasts in general (for instance, people who—as he imagines them—frequent 'Soho dives') get a rough handling. In short, he disapproves of, and goes for, anyone who fails to conform to his ideal norm of a safe, comfortable, unashamedly philistine—albeit 'independent' and eccentric—basic respectability.

★ ★ ★

Politically, Giles's 'Father' would seem, then, to be a Tory Radical, or of the Labour Right (it doesn't much matter which—though I suspect he actually votes Labour, if he remembers to vote at all). He is, in fact, what is known as 'non-political' (that is, one who accepts, consciously or not, the current majority opinion); and Giles's cracks are directed as much at the 'upper classes' (always depicted as lah-di-dah nitwits of the Burlington Bertie vintage, and never as in any way *dangerous*), as at trade unionists (when their activities inconvenience 'the public'—a characteristic consumer's viewpoint), or at particular politicians of either party (Cripps used to be a favourite target—as he was of the Crazy Gang). Even his son George, a sort of faded crypto-Bevanite, would appear to have no political *activity* of any kind. Giles himself is, in fact, in his art, at its best, a critic and an original: and in his ideology, a humorous conformist.

To this we must notice three important exceptions. The first is Giles's attitude to the 'colour question'. On September 7, 1958, he came out with the best, and most categorical cartoon published by anyone on the 'happen-

ings' at Notting Vale whose full shame and disgrace we have none of us yet adequately accepted, let alone redeemed—that is, if we ever can do. This picture showed three Teds walking out of a surgery where their self-provoked wounds had been patched up by a 'coloured' nurse and doctor. Giles's rightness about this, and his silliness about 'foreigners' in general, are an echo of the *Express's* own confusion: of their very creditable anti-racialist line, which accompanies—without any consciousness of inconsistency—their old-fashioned 'imperialist' propaganda.

The next two instances are more ambiguous. Giles, as has been said, is 'pro-American' in a rather mindless, 'tolerant' sort of way. He allows his US characters to call us 'the natives', and British troops to call them 'the occupation army' (in cartoons where RAF personnel polish up their rockets for them, or do guardsman's foot-drill, while sleek US personnel do all the technical work). But although in these, and in a (perhaps significantly large) number of other cartoons about rocketry, there may seem to be, and probably only is, an amiable if defeatist acceptance of the 'inevitable', there is also something of a hint of a gnawing resentment: which took more tangible form in a cartoon (September 22, 1959) of Krushchev's reception in America which, though not particularly flattering to the perambulating Chairman, was certainly not so at all towards the conduct of his hosts.

The other ambiguous exception is *The Bomb*: something of an obsession with Giles, whose 'children' are always exploding home-made ones (when they are not manufacturing sputniks, rockets, weapons of war in general or, rather ghoulishly, hundreds of live, crawling mini-kids in test tubes). *The Bomb*, for Giles, seems to be a rather 'serious' joke; and on September 15, 1959, a junior Giles wrote a letter to his aunt Vera in which the infant had some fairly perspicacious things to say about it—though the overall tone was still quite 'humorous'. Perhaps it is dawning on Giles, as on so many of his countrymen, that if *The Bomb* is a joke, it's about the most hilarious yet devised by man.

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Socially and politically speaking, the world of the Barry Appleby family is a complete blank: neither George nor Gaye has a single idea of any description in their heads, other than the practical-material: though on this level, their observations (or their creator's) are often shrewd enough. It is true they possess a copy of *The Pilgrim's Progress* (which Gaye once used to hide a 10s. note in from George), and that George *can* read (detective stories when he's ill in bed). There was even a dreadful moment when Gaye bought an object of 'modern art', of which the less said the better; and the 'joke' in one cartoon hinges on George's imagining that the question 'can you paint?' means can you paint a wall.

It is the Gambols' sexual life—or the absence of it—



that horribly fascinates most of all. We know they have no child; and of the three families, the Gambols is the only one that sleeps in twin, separate beds (except, on one of their seaside orgies, when the tactless management gave them a double one). George isn't allowed to see Gaye undressing or, if he accidentally does so, ogles her with a libidinous, surreptitious leer. If her 'slip shows', or the dress falls off her shoulder in a public place, there's a little 'scene'. George's chief—in fact, seemingly only—'thrill' is to 'zip Gaye up': a recurrent episode in the household. (I have even wondered whether Barry Appleby's insistence that the little niece and nephew, Miggy and Flivver, are cousins, not brother and sister, may be to lift from their infant frolics any horrid hint of incest.)

They are, in fact, a couple of sexless sparrows (if one can imagine any such sparrows) in their suburban love-nest: where the major events are the annual 'spring clean', the summer tending of the garden (a sympathetic touch, pleasantly contrasting with the infant-slaughtered foliage of the Giles back lawn), and the domestic dramas in the kitchen—where Gaye 'cooks' largely out of tins, and George 'does the dishes' wearing, needless to say, a (female) apron. George talks in his sleep, and Gaye, who sobs easily, will emit, when afraid of a mouse (or the dark, or almost anything), a desperate cry of 'Eek!' (One would really love to know—or rather, hear—what the Giles couple, and the Appleby, would think of each other's domestic customs. Gaye would, most probably, say, 'Eek!' And Giles's, 'Father'?).

George and Gaye are, of course, very *nice* people: that is undeniable. But outside their tiny world of consecrated mediocrity, nothing exists whatever. It is therefore most disconcerting to discover that Barry Appleby (whose own wife, he tells us, helps him with the cartoons) has an enormous fan mail, so that any slight deviation of his hero and heroine from acceptable suburban behaviour must most carefully be explained away. In 1951, the *Express* held a competition (with a £25 prize) to find the 'sporting, happily-married, middle-class couple most like George and Gaye'. There were

4,000 entrants (including, it would appear, two Caribbeans), and the prize was won by a proud pair whose photograph—he, of course, wearing an apron, and washing up—was duly printed by the delighted journal. Of Appleby's actual *drawing*, it only remains to say that it is entirely without quality, since the cartoons are mere ideograms: but none the less effective, as we have seen, for that.

The supreme Lancaster gift is to use Maudie (and, to a much lesser extent, the dimmer Willy) as a vehicle for her creator's tart, apt, shallow and, above all, fantastically *swift* commentaries on the social scene. Within his range of sympathies and of ideas, which is severely limited, Lancaster is off and away a split second after the gun goes, outpacing almost any rival. His wit, which is thought to be 'sophisticated', seems to me not so much 'undergraduate' exactly, as 'sixth form': sharp, irresponsible, often rather mean, and waggish: 'boyish', in fact, as so many English Tory anarchists are (Lancaster on Hailsham and his bell-ringing, for instance, was one sixth former on another).

As a draughtsman, his line is consummate on the best English amateur level (cf Lear, Haselden, or the



"As they're obviously none of them going to be on speaking terms by the time they get there, I quite frankly fail to see the point of the climb."

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anonymous illustrator of Belloc's *Cautionary Tales*); and his observation of *what interests him*, devastatingly acute. Thus, for example, the Knightsbridge fashionable, 'clubland', the clergy, and bourgeois intellectuals, are pinned down exactly; while his teenagers and Teds (like Giles's) are inaccurate or dated—the Teds mere ogres and not the dreadful ingrown *mess* they really are, and his 'teenagers' in point of fact not Soho exquisites, but 'Chelsea-set bohemians'. (His comment on Notting Vale, by the way, was anti-Ted, but not, like Giles's, essentially *for* their victims.) His family are Tory hedonists, 'redeemed' (but then, Tory hedonists often *are*) by a certain 'style': by a cynical detachment towards themselves, and towards modern society, in which—despite their fall from power and, relatively speaking, riches—they are still very conscious of playing a key part. To art itself, their attitude, though well-informed, is frivolous and modish (though it is rather touching to learn that they can both play—and do in private—the piano). On the literary scene, Lancaster mocks the 'Angries' (as who doesn't?), but is not, one feels, very interested in differentiation or analysis of their ideas or personalities. Sexually, his Littlehamptons are, of course, in a worldly sense, uncritical, but there is no hint whatever that Maudie and Willy are other than faithful to their marriage vows; and one is certain, at all events, that their family life is—if the word can be said to fit the Littlehamptons—'sacred' to them. (In bed, Willy still wears his monocle: there is something infinitely reassuring about this.)

As social critics, they (or their creator) lash out—or stab out—in all directions: though often at fairly obvious targets like traffic jams, dirty railways, 'inconvenient' strikes, and so on. Politically, the chief Lancaster dig, on the home front, is that *all* politicians are confused, self-contradictory, and self-deluded (as indeed they are); while overseas, the foreigners revert to their traditional role of being 'funny'—without, as in the case of the English victims, being sympathetically so. Germans are monsters (there is real venom here), the French *very* French indeed, the Russians ludicrous in the extreme (great idiotic, dangerous bears). For the Americans, Lancaster shares with Giles, though in a different way, a thoroughly ambivalent attitude: which fairly accurately reflects the love-hate of English top persons for America—love of the rich, the dispenser of good things (but resentment at their own acceptance of these gifts); and love of the powerful, the 'protector' (but jealousy and fear of that power). Thus Americans are people who take bribes, and who also entertain the parasitic Littlehamptons lavishly in New York. American senators and business-men are amiable, if droll, John Foster Dulles (who tried to implement their policies) a nuisance and a menace. As for *The Bomb*, it is a most unpleasant thing, and because in American hands, it is unpleasant of them, too, to have it... but then, there are those funny Russians to consider, so the best thing for Maudie to do is have another bathe, change into something even more glorious, and go out (*with* Willy—

they are almost as uxorious as George and Gaye) to a diplomatic party where she can make a whip-crack about it all.

We have seen how, in the lives of all three families, the emphasis is on their highly-developed faculty for *consumption*; and, as a corollary to this, that none of them, professionally speaking, *makes* anything—or hardly anything. Willy Littlehampton, perhaps, may do a spot of legislation at the Lords, but that's about all. George Gambol is concerned exclusively with *marketing*. As for the Giles family, though, as I've suggested, there seems to be a business of some kind in the background—which may, in fact, be of a manufacturing description—we see nothing of it, or of whatever it produces. It is true that, so far as 'do-it-yourself' 'production' in the home goes, the Giles family of all generations is outstandingly gifted and resourceful. But they produce nothing for the *community* and, in a general way, an outstanding feature of these family sagas is that all three sets of lives are centred on 'the home' (and on any visitors to it), and not very much on anything else that goes on outside.

We have also seen that, with variations, all these three families are philistine materialists—even, in essentials, the 'cultivated' Littlehamptons; and all of them, incidentally—which is quite sympathetic (and even a little *daring* on the part of the moralising *Daily*—or, at any rate, *Sunday-Express*)—are drinkers, gamblers and (though quite inactively) 'sports lovers'. We may further observe that, in each family, the woman is the dominant partner: as, indeed, she usually is—though not, most emphatically, in the 'Andy Capp' cartoon in the (slightly more) proletarian *Daily Mirror*. Another reflection is that, although George and Gaye (and their inventor) may imagine they are 'middle class' (whereas no one could conceivably be more lower-middle), we shall find that, in point of actual fact, the present problems and aspirations of the professional middle classes, which once governed (if not ruled) England, and which still, in their sharp decline, produce most of what's left of its cultural élite, find no place whatever in this triple family portrait of contemporary English life.

Nor shall we discover (in this most bang-on, alert 'newspaper for the millions') that any of the *newly* erupted social groups of the 1950's—born of the 'new prosperity', and of the cross-fertilisation of English classes—is anywhere represented: two of the families are archaic, and the third (the Gambols), though of today, is simply the 1930's petty-bourgeois with a bigger pay packet, and less fear of the sack. There remains to be noticed one virtue—albeit of a static, not very positive kind—which all these three families possess. And it is that they are all of them, basically, *patriots*: they 'love' England, or their particular fragments of it. But this patriotism is of the uncritical, 'Dunkirk' kind which was England's strength when time was on her side, and is now her dangerous weakness when, as at present, time is no longer on her side at all.

## FILMS

## *The Savage Eye*

Norman Fruchter

*The Savage Eye*, the marquee announces. Winner of Roy Thomson award at Edinburgh Film Festival. Raw. Gripping. Nakedly honest. (Blurbs from London reviews). I go in, doubtful.

Planes, terminals. A big-city airport. Passengers and well-wishers. Motion, confusion. Awkward, unlovely, sweating people—not the carefully selected, typical-American-man-of-the crowd extra. They stumble down the disembarking ramp, stare, search, smile, run to embrace. The camera follows, its angles and shots dictated by the erratic movements of ordinary people. A close-up—one woman, young, not beautiful but attractive, poised, conscious, as evident among these people as the professional in any sphere.

"Alone, stranger?" a male voice asks.

"Uh-huh."

Her words I can accept, as necessary projection of her thought ("I hate the touch of flesh!"), but this slushy hollow-voiced "Oh-god-I'm-speaking-poetry" interrogator is a pretentious intrusion. His attempts at explanation ("I am your angel, double, vile dreamer, conscience, creator, God, ghost," he breathes to the woman) explain nothing, but identify him as an obvious device to insert "deeper" levels of meaning. The poet's (so he is identified at the film's end) mouthings become patently-constructed flows of textbook imagery mixed with cryptic, pseudo-philosophic statements; he is annoying as commentator and unnecessary as interrogator, for we can enter the woman's mind without him. But the film's authors thought not.

Their purpose: to plot one woman's emotional and psychological pilgrimage through despair and attempted negation to salvation and universal love, and at the same time to capture, with documentary faithfulness, the nightmare world of "lost, lonely, unloved" people through which this woman moves. Their technique: a "camera eye", the woman's, through which we see and understand her world, and a stream of consciousness dialogue between the poet, the questioner, and the woman, Judith, the divorcee.

This is no ordinary American film, but a unique experiment, an attempt to fuse documentary realism and fictional narrative into an artistic unity. *The Savage Eye* fails to achieve this. The tension between the force of its documentary presentation and the triteness of its psychologic narrative destroys whatever unity it might have possessed. But its failure is illuminating and sadly representative. In its dishonesty; its omissions, its fictional trivia, and the ostrich-like evasion of its final thesis (acceptance and *love*), it defines the limitations of its writers and all Americans who perceive

the symptoms of our spiritual sickness but cannot dissect and analyse to isolate the cause.

We drift with Judith through beauty parlours (comb against scalp, back to the womb escape as child to mother, sexual response in the manipulation of hair and skin), health clinics and reducing salons (women seeking in the attempted redistribution of their flesh their lust, their need), plastic surgery wards (the surgeon an artist of the flesh, recreating feature for need), bars, wrestling matches (spectators' captured instants of emotional release: hate, anger, fear, pride, lust, triumph, righteousness, torn from them by the scripted fakery of the professional wrestler), strip joints (the calculated obscenity of the stripper's act and its effect on her audience), New Year's Eve parties (frantic, fumbling, search for fun, fellowship, sex), faith healers (an impossibly brilliant revelation here of both the complete charlatanism of the healer and its intense but understandable emotional effect on the worshippers)—the camera's naked honesty jolts me into painful recognition of people I have known and worlds I have moved through.

What do they search for, in this mechanical paradise of satisfaction? Love, the poet insists, all humans need only love. Judith, because of the shock of her husband's infidelity and her emotional emptiness after her divorce, rejects love, other people, communication—wants only to lose herself, forget her past, and become nothing. She sees the lost and lonely as a disgusting world of sordid flesh, a riot of animals struggling in their muck. So she ripples into her chosen world of escape—gambling, liquor, speed, clothes, sports, men. She rejects the poet's attempts to make her face her denial of her value as a person, sinks from bitterness to a flippant evasion of all value or purpose in life. Even her attempt to deny her sexual morality by an indulgence in "loveless love", brings her not satisfaction but unavoidable disgust at the degradation of her flesh.

"I must wash," Judith moans, wash and wash and wash; even her car gets washed, but nothing will remove her sense of filth. She has tried to escape from herself and her responsibilities as a person, but she has failed, and her uphill journey to salvation begins. She has found an identity she cannot deny.

"I hate your one track pity!" the poet cries, the world is *not* (anything definable), it is only people and their need. They are *not* sick, futile, disgusting, it is your self-pity and your loathing that makes you see them that way. These people are you and you are them; human beings searching for love. You must accept them.

# On The Beach

Ian Woolf

Wait, I want to shout, is no human activity a perversion? Can you accept everything these people are forced to do to slake their need? After we experience, through Judith's eyes, this spectrum of frozen emotions, inarticulate needs, inexpressible longings, being exploited by the diabolically clever devices of the American commodity, entertainment, and religious industries, we are ready to ask the inescapable question, "What kind of society alienates all these people and then, provides the mechanical means for their satisfaction?" But the poet cries only "Accept, accept!" And, granted an auto accident and blood transfusions from men of all races, Judith accepts this world of perversion and chooses to love all within it.

Her acceptance is easily the worst part of the film. The music ascends to the rarified atmosphere of hallowed hosannaing, the images of her resurrection become the surging wages of good old eternal mother sea and her childhood toys on the beach ("I dreamt of resurrection in a party dress.") Her reveries are studded with poorly camouflaged steals from Eliot, Yeats, Auden ("The only obscenity is death. The animal is me. I grow younger, I grow younger. I must be merciful before I can be happy—I must be sick before I can be real—I must be false before I can choose.") And Judith chooses life, love for all mankind. Do you accept "the stripper, arsonist, rapist!" the poet asks. "Yes," Judith answers. "We're all secret lovers of one another—the universe of interconnection, the world, the melting world. I accept—as bridge and stranger."

The final scene, lovers on the beach. Judith reports their whispers.

"What did you think about?"

"When?"

"You know when."

"Roses!"

"Amen," trumpets the poet. The sea, gulls' white wings flash in sunlight, the waves roll. *The end.*

In spite of this romantic evasion. *The Savage Eye* is so much better than I imagined an American film could be. Honest, powerful, even dangerous. It asks us to accept not only a world of suffering people but what these people do to ease their suffering. It implies that we can never judge or condemn people's actions because we all search only for love. It implies an acceptance not only of people, and their needs, but a society that alienates these people from the normal human satisfactions and then produces the escape mechanisms necessary to slake them; it implies an acceptance of everything that *is*, a denial of change, of the possibilities of growth and progress towards a society in which more people would inhabit the normal community of humanity rather than the mechanical maze of the nightmare world of *The Savage Eye*. A triumph of honest compelling documentation, a failure as a personal psychologic narrative, *The Savage Eye* raises but fails to answer our inescapable question, "What have we wrought for ourselves in our USA, and how can we change it?"

NEVILLE SHUTE expected the third world war to begin (and end) next year, 1961; and within a few months of the end of the war (which will last approximately 37 days) the entire human race will be burned, blasted or, if they are outside the battle areas, poisoned by the radioactive atmosphere carried by winds from the northern to the southern hemisphere. The last survivors, in Melbourne, and in particular a naval officer (Peter) and his young wife and baby, a scientist who helped to build the Bomb, the Commander of the last American submarine, and the woman (Moir) who tries to 'take his mind off things' go about their relatively normal lives until they too succumb with vomiting, blood, diarrhoea and suicide pills.

Stanley Kramer, directing his fourth film (the third was *The Defiant Ones*) has granted us all an extension until 1964, and provided all anti-Bomb campaigners and persuaders with vitally important anti-war propaganda. Important, because apart from dealing with the only war that matters—the next one—the film of *On The Beach* challenges many of our preconceived notions of how to dissuade the human race from destroying itself.

There is no blood or diarrhoea in the film version, and the vomiting is left to your imagination. It is this fact, plus the rather stock performances of Gregory Peck as the Submarine Commander and Ava Gardner as his temporary girl-friend which has muted the effectiveness of the film for so many critics. They are aghast at the cosiness, normality and calmness of everything. Who, they ask, is going to be stirred by lashings of *Waltzing Matilda* and Beautiful Contra-jour Clinches for Gardner and Peck? Undoubtedly, one could have done with less of the slush, but is this a high price to pay for Fred Astaire's very important lines, all of them more intense and direct than anything said by the scientist in Shute's original novel?

Is an audience which has accepted the basic situation of the film likely to be worried by Peck's portrayal of the submarine Commander as a bewildered, inarticulate man suffering from what appears to be delayed and permanent shock? He talks about his wife and children back home and plans for their future, although he knows that they and everyone else in the United States is dead. As he explains to Ava Gardner, he had got used to the idea that something might happen to him, but had always taken it for granted that the people back home would be safe. He "just can't seem to cope with it"—with *his* safety and *their* destruction. When confronted with the first case of radiation sickness in one of his crew, he cannot understand why just one man should get it first. The naval doctor has to point out that "we are not all machines you know, we shan't fall down

# On The Beach

Ian Woolf

Wait, I want to shout, is no human activity a perversion? Can you accept everything these people are forced to do to slake their need? After we experience, through Judith's eyes, this spectrum of frozen emotions, inarticulate needs, inexpressible longings, being exploited by the diabolically clever devices of the American commodity, entertainment, and religious industries, we are ready to ask the inescapable question, "What kind of society alienates all these people and then, provides the mechanical means for their satisfaction?" But the poet cries only "Accept, accept!" And, granted an auto accident and blood transfusions from men of all races, Judith accepts this world of perversion and chooses to love all within it.

Her acceptance is easily the worst part of the film. The music ascends to the rarified atmosphere of hallowed hosannaing, the images of her resurrection become the surging wages of good old eternal mother sea and her childhood toys on the beach ("I dreamt of resurrection in a party dress.") Her reveries are studded with poorly camouflaged steals from Eliot, Yeats, Auden ("The only obscenity is death. The animal is me. I grow younger, I grow younger. I must be merciful before I can be happy—I must be sick before I can be real—I must be false before I can choose.") And Judith chooses life, love for all mankind. Do you accept "the stripper, arsonist, rapist!" the poet asks. "Yes," Judith answers. "We're all secret lovers of one another—the universe of interconnection, the world, the melting world. I accept—as bridge and stranger."

The final scene, lovers on the beach. Judith reports their whispers.

"What did you think about?"

"When?"

"You know when."

"Roses!"

"Amen," trumpets the poet. The sea, gulls' white wings flash in sunlight, the waves roll. *The end.*

In spite of this romantic evasion. *The Savage Eye* is so much better than I imagined an American film could be. Honest, powerful, even dangerous. It asks us to accept not only a world of suffering people but what these people do to ease their suffering. It implies that we can never judge or condemn people's actions because we all search only for love. It implies an acceptance not only of people, and their needs, but a society that alienates these people from the normal human satisfactions and then produces the escape mechanisms necessary to slake them; it implies an acceptance of everything that *is*, a denial of change, of the possibilities of growth and progress towards a society in which more people would inhabit the normal community of humanity rather than the mechanical maze of the nightmare world of *The Savage Eye*. A triumph of honest compelling documentation, a failure as a personal psychologic narrative, *The Savage Eye* raises but fails to answer our inescapable question, "What have we wrought for ourselves in our USA, and how can we change it?"

NEVILLE SHUTE expected the third world war to begin (and end) next year, 1961; and within a few months of the end of the war (which will last approximately 37 days) the entire human race will be burned, blasted or, if they are outside the battle areas, poisoned by the radioactive atmosphere carried by winds from the northern to the southern hemisphere. The last survivors, in Melbourne, and in particular a naval officer (Peter) and his young wife and baby, a scientist who helped to build the Bomb, the Commander of the last American submarine, and the woman (Moir) who tries to 'take his mind off things' go about their relatively normal lives until they too succumb with vomiting, blood, diarrhoea and suicide pills.

Stanley Kramer, directing his fourth film (the third was *The Defiant Ones*) has granted us all an extension until 1964, and provided all anti-Bomb campaigners and persuaders with vitally important anti-war propaganda. Important, because apart from dealing with the only war that matters—the next one—the film of *On The Beach* challenges many of our preconceived notions of how to dissuade the human race from destroying itself.

There is no blood or diarrhoea in the film version, and the vomiting is left to your imagination. It is this fact, plus the rather stock performances of Gregory Peck as the Submarine Commander and Ava Gardner as his temporary girl-friend which has muted the effectiveness of the film for so many critics. They are aghast at the cosiness, normality and calmness of everything. Who, they ask, is going to be stirred by lashings of *Waltzing Matilda* and Beautiful Contra-jour Clinches for Gardner and Peck? Undoubtedly, one could have done with less of the slush, but is this a high price to pay for Fred Astaire's very important lines, all of them more intense and direct than anything said by the scientist in Shute's original novel?

Is an audience which has accepted the basic situation of the film likely to be worried by Peck's portrayal of the submarine Commander as a bewildered, inarticulate man suffering from what appears to be delayed and permanent shock? He talks about his wife and children back home and plans for their future, although he knows that they and everyone else in the United States is dead. As he explains to Ava Gardner, he had got used to the idea that something might happen to him, but had always taken it for granted that the people back home would be safe. He "just can't seem to cope with it"—with *his* safety and *their* destruction. When confronted with the first case of radiation sickness in one of his crew, he cannot understand why just one man should get it first. The naval doctor has to point out that "we are not all machines you know, we shan't fall down

in rows." But if Clancy Sigal's survey of GI's in Britain (*Encounter*, February, 1960), is any guide, Peck's portrayal of the military mind is quite accurate. He is a man with little imagination, a deliberate lack of emotion, and some humour. Above all, he is a man who is "doing his job to the best of his ability".

Our annoyance with Peck's performance may stem from his failure to make some deliberate comment on the military element's responsibility, his failure to take that responsibility on himself and condemn the sort of mechanical thinking which has produced the final world war.

To Astaire falls the task of stating why the war started. And he does it three times; the first time rather drunkenly: "You can't put all the blame on the scientists . . . We all had a choice . . . either to make the Bomb . . . or to find some means of controlling it. . . ." This self-evident truth is not as generally accepted as one would like to think, and it may be that the film's most effective piece of propaganda is the planting and repeating of the idea that the next war was (still is) a matter of choice, of decisions to be made or not made, and not the result of some immutable law or act of the gods. In his second and third answers, the scientist is confronted by some of the members of the American submarine crew, who question him as much for the laughs as for any useful opinions the 'egg-head' may have.

"It started," says Astaire, in big close-up, "*when people accepted the idea that they could defend themselves with weapons which, if they used them, would mean certain suicide.*"

It is the film's most serious fault, and the point at which its attack is softened, that it fails to be specific about who 'people' really are. The military, with Peck as its silent spokesman, is attacked only by implication. The sequence in the submarine reveals at least some of the crew as a sneering, sniggering bunch of anti-intellectuals whose reaction to the scientists' words is summed up by the line: "Well, that's the last time I try asking *him* any questions." But some critics have made the mistake of identifying the crew's attitude with that of the makers of the film. Kramer has in fact used Astaire's own personality, as well as his role, to make his lines as convincing as possible.

Towards the end of the film we see the citizens of Melbourne queueing for their government issue of suicide pills. This scene, like so much else in the film is full of understatement. The atmosphere is abnormally normal. Before the radiation reaches them the Melbourne streets are full of people. Most of them are walking or on cycles, because petrol is very scarce, but the machinery of society is kept going. People hold

parties, *discuss* the war, go to the beach, and, inevitably, hang on to the last hope, the faint chance that, 'it' may never happen. The film leaves out the more obvious signs of social disintegration of the book; the drunks, the empty shops and garages, the gradual abandonment of money, etc. The result of these changes of emphasis is to create a Melbourne which externally at least, is barely distinguishable from our own current situation. Instead of being apocalyptic, and thus for many people, emotionally unapproachable, the setting approximates to our own environment. This is more than just dropping the scarifying picture of the world's end and substituting a viewable one; it is, I think, a deliberate attempt to project the arguments—about how the war started, the 'reality' of the suicide pills, the fact that the civilians will suffer more than the fighting men—into the world of 1960.

There are no Ban the Bomb demonstrations in Melbourne; just a rather pathetic Salvation Army meeting where God's forgiveness may be begged, and over which flutters the banner: *There is still time . . . brother*. Perhaps the most significant addition that Kramer and his writer have made to the original novel. Inevitably, much of the film's point is going to be made through the irony of the situation, (the empty, but undamaged streets, the American power station, which goes on generating electricity for months after everyone in the USA is dead). But the banner is clearly more than an ironic comment. The director has used it in place of the usual 'End' title; and it is this slogan which the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has quickly adopted. Finally, it may have been just this slogan which, by the end of the film's West End run, had produced several hundred new members for CND.

The important question for the peace-persuader is whether even these few hundred recruits justify a form of propaganda which apparently needs to disguise itself so thoroughly as entertainment. Was it necessary, say, to make the Grand Prix sequence in *On The Beach* so violent and exciting? Well, if we ignore the fact that the film followed the book practically smash for smash, there does remain the need at that point of the film to quicken the pace, and break the evenness of the previous three-quarters of the film.

Certainly *On The Beach* does not provide many answers. It tells us that there is still time—but not how to use that time. In various ways it shows our defence policies to be suicidal but does not relate these policies to any responsible and identifiable groups. And it does all this with a professional polish and deceptively familiar set of cinema clichés, working at that level of communication which Hollywood's independent producers have brought to a fine art.

There are several different tasks that propagandists

need to tackle, at different levels, and with different audiences. At its own level *On The Beach* may help to breach that vast reservoir of fatalism and acquiescence which allows suicide to be the indefinite aim of our governments. Revealing "the ways in which personal troubles are connected with public issues", widening the awareness of the average man, are not tasks which will necessarily debase the propagandist. We cannot

"make peace exciting" using the symbols which sell racial pride and the validity of violence. We *can* demonstrate the arbitrary moralities which arise in the conditions of peace and war. Robert Shaw's novel *The Hiding Place* does it brilliantly.

But let us start by dropping the theory that you can *frighten* people out of war. It isn't *how* we go that matters; it is whether we go or not!

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## A Boy's World—And Ours

Brian Jackson

This article describes the impact of the mass media on the sensitive mind and imagination of a young child.

ALAN AND GRAHAM are both ten. Each Tuesday afternoon I take their class for an English lesson whilst my own boys move across the corridor for a music period. During the half hour that we share, the boys are stimulated to act, draw or write about their daily lives freely and spontaneously. But I had not been working with them for very long before I noticed that whatever Alan drew or wrote or dramatised fell into a continuing pattern. He was absorbed by the prospect of death. He feared death intensely and was disturbed by it in the form of accident or punishment. He needed to explore the experience at the point of dying—and pulled many of his stories around to this characteristic situation . . .

"He was really scared now . . . The police shot them off one by one . . . while he was lying on the stage, half dead and half alive, he must have thought . . ."

Even in the most formal work offered to his own class teacher the controlling meditation breaks through . . .

"I was lying in bed, I was thinking what would happen when I was dead and how it would happen. And then I was thinking what the Romans, Picts and Saxons must have felt like, and now they are covered with dust. They just lie there and will be there for ever. And what it will be like when I am there and covered with dirt, and all kinds of things . . ."

I find this kind of need and perception most unusual in a ten-year-old boy. Very seldom do children sense death with such a terrible finality. Of course it invades their activities at every point. But most children seem to feel it more simply, and with a shallowness natural to their years. Being dead is a form of absence, and perhaps not radically distinct from other losses by

departure. For Alan this was not so. He understood as an adult might.

This troubled and puzzled me. I grew to feel, however, that though Alan was abnormally acute in this way, his was an abnormality of health—a premonition of coming maturity. I could see in what other ways his personality could be assessed, but I came to believe that, though unusual, this was a right and not disfiguring phase for one particular child. All the same his rarer sensibilities exposed him more keenly to certain strong pressures from the adult world. He was most open to receive and learn from the images of violence that he discovered in comics or films or papers. It is for this reason that I illustrate his case.

I am compelled to ask myself whether the mass media can, and do, damage children. By this I do not mean whether they distract them from schoolwork, or aspects of home life, or valuable pursuits and occupations of their own. This may or may not be so: but here it comes as a secondary, if related, matter. I am primarily trying to decide whether, working every day with young children, I can say that some of the forms of news reporting, of fictional amusement and illustrated selling that our society permits, actively stunt or deform growing personalities.

The multiple play of that society's endorsements and disapprovals, through the mass media, upon the infinitely delicate texture of a child's nature becomes difficult and elusive to record. But it is worthwhile to try to do just that, and important that we don't evade the perplexities by accepting too simple or comforting



an answer. If a child's handling of violence presses itself upon me, and if I quell my doubts with a "boys will be boys" kind of response, or if I accept that a child somewhat affected by a newspaper treatment of death would probably be in the same position after reading the traditional Border Ballads, then I believe I am employing such an evasion. Only a little thought shows how illusory these answers can be.

Let me return to Alan. He is a bright pupil with an alert interest in reading. At home he seems to draw deeply on the tabloid press. And in the vividly-lit world that he can discover there, even the most gifted boy is an innocent, and most open to the promptings and colourings pushed out to him. The Marwood execution provided an instance. The treatment of that execution affected several of the boys. One or two wanted to paint hangings their stories were sometimes shaped by the event, and on the way to school one morning there was the single word "marwood" chalked on the paving stones across the usual jumble of initials.

## The Treatment of Death

How much did all this mean? Perhaps very little; but I was very quickly aware of individual cases where the effect went deeper and was seemingly absorbed into the personality. Now this was not a question of protecting children from death, or the facts of society as it is—nor need we introduce the rights or wrongs of capital punishment. It was the *treatment* of death that mattered, a treatment approved by publication and by adult purchase. These children were just opening themselves to a fuller awareness both of death and of sexual relationships. It was from the mass media that many of them were gaining their new and germinal impressions. What mattered was the feelings they were encouraged to have—or not to have. For when they gave themselves over to certain accounts of this execution—as they did do—you could not simply say that their feelings were being manipulated. They were actually being taught to feel in certain prime areas of human responsibility for the first time. There could be—and sometimes was—a tainting of the affective faculties at their very source. In his sense of death and the need for a proper relationship towards it, Alan was both different and older than his friends. So in his case the struggles seemed nearer the surface and were certainly more articulate. Working with him one saw more lucidly quite what challenge was presented to a child's nature by a full exposure to this world.

His free writing had responded immediately to the execution, and he projected himself directly into Marwood's situation, into possibilities of cold execution, hot spectatorship and human error. He followed these Marwood stories with crude drawings of a man being hanged over which in imitation banner headlines he scrawled LET MARWOOD GO.

Clearly the turmoil of feeling beneath and within his work was crossed by lines of protest. But his writing was driven by the sense that what he had been reading

in his father's paper was the true nature of the adult world into which he would grow and adapt himself. All the sanctions of his elders were, apparently, behind both the execution and the treatment of that execution in the morning paper. This, for a time, nourished his imagination and played some part in the movement of growth.

## Particular Cases

I feel this all the more urgently when I look at what Graham, sitting only a desk away, was writing at the same time. Graham's life is rooted in richer soil. His prose, with its multiplying perceptions, moves from a direct response to creaturely life and the natural world. It is boyish and awkward in many ways—but surely it is also marvellously gentle in meeting the small accidents of the world as a boy might know them . . .

"The sun was shining down on our green carpet of grass in the back garden, where I was lying with my pet cat and rabbit. From my position the flowers looked like a mass of mixed colours, reds, yellows, blues, pinks, and as many other colours as you could think of. Suddenly my cat pounced on something. It was white. It looks like a butterfly. Yes it is! It's a white one, spotted underneath its wings with black. I quickly picked the cat up. He had the butterfly in his mouth. I opened his mouth to get it out. After a little while I got it out but his wing was damaged. So I kept it and it fluttered in my hand like a piece of paper blown by a fan. I kept it until it was better then I let it out in my garden. It fluttered away on to our elm tree."

I quote Graham's work to illustrate what I take to be the proper direction of growth. He is hardly at all in contact with the more lurid aspects of the mass media. His awakening curiosities of feeling find their satisfactions in home life and the natural world. Is it too much to say that this nascent tenderness promises to flow through into adult life and the commitment to adult responsibilities there? I think not. I think it matters that the channels of feeling are kept open and not discoloured in these early years.

There are other boys in the class like Graham, just as there are also other boys like Alan. And within the ones like Alan one must assume, and work in the interests of, the perpetual possibilities of something finer. This is what the general discussion on the mass media might come down to—the human particular of this or that child growing up. It is difficult to document the charges that are made, but it *can* be done. I have argued from two markedly individual cases—but in the end this is what we are pointing to and caring about. Whatever the general effects may be, there are children here and there in every classroom who by reason of their needs or gifts or weaknesses, are placed in a peculiarly tense relationship to this facet of adult society. I am not here interested in deciding whether this is or is not an aspect of society that we must accept. But I *am* claiming that whatever our ultimate decisions are, it is against the run of direct evidence to ignore the fact of lost or ill-shaped human qualities in the passage of childhood.

# REPORT

# THE NATION'S

THE POLICIES now being pursued by the National Coal Board in the coalfields are fraught with danger, both for the coal industry and the national economy. They stem from the government's fuel and power policy, which in the name of 'competition' produces a tangle of conflicting and unco-ordinated decisions. One thread runs through all. The oil companies benefit. Oil-coal 'competition' in particular is a game played with loaded dice (e.g. the oil companies may discriminate; coal cannot).

The coal industry's situation is a complex one and requires detailed analysis. The impact on the national economy is by contrast starkly obvious. By the mid-1960's, total fuel consumption in Britain will be rising past 300 million tons of 'coal equivalent' p.a. If current policies in the coal industry are persisted in, it is unlikely that the coal industry will be able to supply more than 200 million tons of coal, even if that much can be sold (of which there is no guarantee) in face of deliberate under-cutting of prices by oil. Atomic energy will provide scarcely 20 million tons of coal equivalent p.a., secured at the expense of an extremely costly programme of power station construction. The fuel and power 'gap' will be filled by oil.

The additional cost of oil imports (net) at such a level of consumption would already be about £200 million p.a. more than in the late 1950's, and increasing rapidly. This is an amount of the same order as the balance of payments surpluses of recent years. Yet the government that contemplates this situation without concern, is the same one that argues the need for a balance of payments surplus of £450 million p.a., particularly to allow scope for investment and assistance abroad. When, in a few years' time, the government explains that our economy cannot 'afford' to find capital on a scale sufficient to help under-developed countries, that our balance of payments position 'unfortunately' does not make this possible, the rapid increase in our dependence on oil will almost certainly be the main reason.

Criticism of the National Coal Board's current policies would be one-sided without an explanation of the responsibility of Tory governments for the dilemma of the coal industry. Past policies play their part. When coal was scarce in the early and mid 1950's, the government deliberately held down coal prices to a level which never even made possible adequate provision for depreciation, (I argued the case against this policy three years ago in the *New Statesman*, January 19, 1957, *Policy for Coal*). The arrangement by which the Minister did this is known as a 'Gentleman's Agreement', presumably because it rests on no statutory authority nor is the Minister accountable to Parliament for what are in fact his decisions. This meant, on the one hand, that the National Coal Board emerged from a decade of coal shortages without any financial reserves,

and instead with greatly increased capital liabilities. On the other hand, holding down coal prices delayed the conversion of British industry to efficient fuel using equipment. This changeover could have been hastened in the early 1950's, using the stick of higher coal prices to the inefficient, and the carrot of tax allowances on new equipment. Industry would then have used coal, but used it more efficiently. Instead the changeover has been delayed until aggressive selling of fuel oil, now relatively cheaper, uncertainties as to the impact of the Clean Air Act, and more attention to production costs in the years of deflation, have combined to precipitate the installation of modern oil-burning equipment.

At the same time, the railways have swung away from steam, not to electrification but to diesels. In electricity generation, the decision that was taken, in face of the coal shortages of the years 1954-55, to convert a number of power stations to oil burning, led to a sizeable jump in oil-use only by 1958, when oil displaced 4 million tons of coal, and when—ironically—the coal shortage had disappeared. The contraction in demand for coal was reinforced by the effect of the long drawn out stagnation of industrial production. Meanwhile, oil imports rose 15 per cent between 1956 and 1958 despite the recession. In the first three quarters of 1959 they were over 20 per cent higher than in the first three quarters of 1958.

At the same time the programme of major capital investment in coal (so unwisely delayed for five years after nationalisation) has begun to yield results. Year after year in the 1950's, coal output and productivity stagnated (inevitably, given the time-lags in completing development projects), only for productivity to improve rapidly just when market demand was transformed. The National Coal Board's steps to curb output have been to a considerable extent offset by (and themselves part cause of) a rise in productivity of 6 per cent in 1959 as compared with 1958. In 1958-59 all the National Coal Board's estimates of demand, of production and productivity went awry. Partly, this showed itself in unintended increases in coal stocks. Partly, it has led the National Coal Board, ever more urgently, to pursue a reduction in manpower, to contract the industry far faster than is safe. Even from *Revised Plan for Coal*, which glosses over the real problems where it can, it is clear that this reduction in output now has precedence both over reduction of current costs of production and over longer run maintenance of capacity. "In 1960 and 1961 it is probable that some pits now working double-shift will be put on to single-shift. At other pits, the number of faces being worked may have to be temporarily reduced. Measures such as these are often expensive, and there may well be difficulties when

it becomes necessary to step up production" (p. 13). "Difficulties" is too mild a word.

The National Coal Board, determined to bring output in 1960–61 down well below the level of demand so as to secure a rapid liquidation of stocks of coal, has made no attempt to offset by recruitment 1959's abnormally heavy wastage of mining manpower. In the first nine months of 1959 the National Coal Board recruited only 21,000; the wastage from the industry in the same period was 57,000, a rate significantly higher than in 1958, even allowing for compulsory retirement of men over 65.

The National Coal Board is confronted simultaneously by a series problem of redundancy, and a serious problem of labour shortages. The coalfields where the biggest permanent fall in manpower is intended are all characterised by male unemployment rates distinctly higher than the rest of Britain. Here the National Coal Board will face (or create) a serious and persistent problem of redundancy especially among the older mineworkers. The main coalfields where output is planned to rise (E. and W. Midlands, Yorkshire) are all characterised by very low unemployment rates—they are the areas where the industrial boom of the early 1960's will be at its most hectic; here men will be bid away by high-wage industries. In the W. Midland in recent years 15 per cent of the miners have left the industry each year, in Yorkshire nearly 10 per cent. Moreover, the policy of reducing the number of miners by 'natural wastage' seriously worsens the age structure. The older men stay, the younger go and are not replaced. National Coal Board data for 1957 and 1958 show that less than 4 per cent of the 41–60 age range leave the industry each year; this compares with 17 per cent p.a. of the under-21's, and over 12 per cent p.a. for those aged 21–30. Yet all the emphasis of technical change in the pits is to make it more difficult to find a place for the older miner.

In the last two years the National Coal Board has offered the working miner—in addition to the insecurity inherent in his work—a harsher industrial discipline and environment, and a distinct possibility of the scrap-heap in later middle age (the improved agreement on redundancy pay is a recognition of that, rather than a real offset to it). The damage to human relations in the industry may well be permanent; one cannot but be impressed at the renewed emphasis of the miner that "no son of mine. . . ."

One thing is certain, the manpower and production estimates for the mid-1960's set out in *Revised Plan for Coal* have no basis in reality. As reasoned estimates at coalfield level they simply do not exist at all. The National Coal Board should not imagine that, with the

environment they have created in the coal industry (insecurity, tension, and depression—an industry that 'cannot afford' to reduce the working day to what it was before the General Strike), they can attract and hold enough younger men in highly prosperous manufacturing areas.

The damage done to the capacity, and human potential, of the industry will at best take some years to undo. At worst the situation may be concealed by the continued pressure of oil competition as the oil companies push fuel oil sales at whatever price is required to make permanent the coal industry's reduction in capacity. It is in their interest, without overmuch regard for current profit margins on fuel oil, to achieve a reduction in size of the coal industry that commits our economy for a decade to the whims of the oil companies. For instance, power stations were changed to oil for fear of coal shortage; now the oil is offered at a price the electricity authority finds 'compares favourably' with coal. In 1960–61 the oil used will be equivalent to 7½ million tons of coal a year. And after that? A reversal of present policy here would be of material assistance to coal. Essentially, this is a political responsibility. The prospect may look grim, but the government's whole position on fuel and power is vulnerable.

To argue that one must not interfere in a beneficial process of competition is hardly adequate when it is the use of our only great indigenous raw material that is at stake. The 'economic' pit closures already undertaken or projected represent a permanent loss of about 100 million tons of coal reserves. Are we so sure of our future needs that we can be so prodigal? Again, it is surely odd to pursue a 'policy' regardless of the import saving from coal use, in the same economy that provides over £200 million a year to agriculture in subsidies for reasons which have no economic rationale other than import saving (and, one might add, not much of that). It is strange to argue that the temporarily lowest-cost supply of fuel must be the decisive consideration as between coal and oil, when this is evidently not the basis for policy in the case of atomic energy. *The Economist* estimated recently (May 9, 1959) that "nuclear power stations coming in during the next decade are going to produce electricity costing 20 per cent more than that from the best type of thermal station." For the coal industry it is a case of heads you win, tails I lose.

The urgent task for the Labour Party and the Trade Unions is to work out a detailed and constructive fuel and power policy, and to put it across, as a challenge to the government's preference for primeval chaos in the operation of our basic industries. The discussion on nationalisation that has achieved so little as yet might take this crying need as a starting point.

# Crowther Over Education

A three-part analysis and critique of the recent proposals contained in the Crowther Report on Education.

IN MARCH 1956 Sir David Eccles asked the Central Advisory Council for Education to advise him on the education of the 15–18 age-group. After 3½ years the Council has produced a Report. This includes the major recommendations that a 20-year plan should begin in 1960 aiming (a) to raise the minimum school-leaving age to sixteen by 1969, and (b) to provide in the

Seventies, after an experimental period, compulsory part-time education for all young people of 16–18 who are not in full-time education; both recommendations already form part of the 1944 Education Act, which should therefore be implemented by about 1980. Precisely what has been achieved?

## Assumptions: *Peter Newsam*

IMPRISONED IN every fat man, Cyril Connolly once wrote, a thin one is wildly signalling to be let out. So it is with the Crowther Report. A genuine reforming impulse can be seen to be trapped within a set of profoundly conservative assumptions about the nature of education and society. Criticism, which ought always to have some positive consequence, can in this case perhaps become an act of liberation.

The Report's inadequacies are apparent in its attempt to answer the three age-old questions: what is the function of education? what is society? and how are the two to be related?

Over the first the Report is commendably clear. Education has two functions. The first is to enable an individual to make a contribution to "national efficiency". The second, and more important, relates to "those other objectives of any education which have little or nothing to do with vocation." An honest attempt is made to define the nature of these objectives. First, it is recognised that as the values of industrial society are often defective, the young require some form of defensive armour: a generalised sales resistance to smooth talk of all descriptions. But the development of the "human personality" is seen to require more than this: "the teenagers with whom we are concerned need, perhaps before all else, to find a faith to live by. They will not all find precisely the same faith and some will not find any. Education can and should play some part in their search. It can assure them there is something to search for. . . ." However true it may be that the search for faith is one that each individual must undertake for himself, this account of its nature seems profoundly inadequate. From faith as reasoned and essentially shareable affirmation, we have descended to something that is not even a collective hunt for the same slipper. But though inadequate, the Report's view is at least clear. Furthermore it implies an answer to the question: what is society? That such an answer is nowhere made explicit is understandable; the Report is not intended as a philosophical treatise. On the other hand, the poverty of the answer that is implicit in the Report's discussions is not

reassuring. Society, it there appears, is simply taken to be the environment of the individual entering it; it is the world "in which he has been set." There is no recognition that individuals are coming together for any particular purpose, other than to increase national efficiency. Even this purpose is apparently not related to the needs of the young: "Industry does not exist for the sake of the teenager." True, but for what purpose does it exist? Does it even exist for the sake of the teenager's father? With so much that needs saying left unsaid, it is difficult to discover whether the Report sees society as anything more than the industrial process plus the relationships an individual enters into in his spare time. On the whole, it appears that it doesn't.

Thirdly, how does the Report see the relation of education to society? The thin man, if one element in the Report's thinking may be so described, sees that society is in some ways imperfect. To the question: What is it in society that I must develop my personality to resist? he is prepared to give some sort of an answer. But the surrounding fat man will not hear of it: "Education", he says, "can only function within the broad directives of right and wrong which society gives." It follows that criticism of those directives, at least in moral terms, must be inadmissible. So there it is. On the one hand the values of society are held to be defective, on the other they are removed from criticism. The effect is that, undermined by the fear of self-contradiction, the voice of reform is sadly muted. This has three serious and practical consequences.

The first concerns the diagnosis of what is wrong with society. On reading the Report one might suppose that the principal danger confronting the young was that of sexual incontinence. Society's standards, it appears, are too lax and the young need protection from their own impulses. It is certainly true that during "that April weather of the soul", as the Report nauseously puts it, sex problems can cause great personal unhappiness. It is also true that the convenient thing about sexual standards is that the nation or the individual prospers

almost equally whether they are upheld or not. There is therefore no direct conflict between the two functions of education, the need for personal standards and the pursuit of national efficiency. In this respect sexual standards are unlike those which seek to regulate greed, pride and envy. If we were to take the latter seriously our national efficiency might well be impaired. Happily, except perhaps accidentally, fornication does not increase the national product. It can therefore be safely condemned. Besides, it is wrong.

Apart from a passing reference to the mass media, this is the limit of the Report's criticism of society.

A second weakness concerns what the Report has to say about the place of education in a society that is seen to be partly defective and partly not open to criticism. Once again nothing very definite emerges. It is seen clearly enough that the supply of education cannot safely be left to market forces; someone must intervene. But to what extent? Here the "we" that was so positive about the need to preserve the family ("we can be content with nothing less") becomes strangely diffident: "Nor is it for us to set the relative priorities of education and of the many other claims upon the national resources." Yet curiously enough, and in a negative way, they do set priorities. We are told that County Colleges and raising the school leaving age are both urgent reforms. Principally on financial grounds, both cannot be undertaken together. But does this not imply, by setting an upper limit to expenditure, a decision about the part education should play in our community? We are a nation, the Report is saying, that may be prepared to spend, over the next twenty years, about the same proportion of its income on education as it has spent during the past twenty, plus up to five per cent of the expected increase in that income. To justify even this modest increase in expenditure, the Report is driven into showing that educational reform almost pays for itself over the years. One looks in vain for a similar humility in those whose business it is to poop off unusable rockets. The reason is clear. The conservative mind has a simple picture of what it is to attack and be attacked; it lacks a similar idea of what an educated community might be like.

The third consequence of the Report's central inadequacy concerns the problem of communication. Failure to communicate is seen simply as inability to do so. The answer suggested is to teach young people of diverse values and interests the way or ways in which their fellows think. To this end we are introduced to the idea of literacy for the scientist and numeracy for the Arts student. The Report is not alone in its analysis of the problem. When Sir Charles Snow, straddling the gap between the 'two cultures', addresses himself to a similar problem, he reaches a similar conclusion. Excessive, or at least unintelligent specialisation at school is at the root of the trouble.

I believe this view expresses a partial truth and manages to obscure a far greater one. The partial truth is that values are to some extent contagious. By

associating with people who hold divergent views we may achieve a certain awareness, if not acceptance, of those values. But this does not get to the heart of the matter. The truth that is obscured is the simple one that people communicate most effectively when they want to, and they want to when they share a common interest in the success of their attempt to do so. It is misleading to assume that communication is what occurs or fails to occur when two people with different interests sit opposite each other in the Club. Vital communication is between people who really want to share an experience or fulfil some common purpose.

It is, therefore, more true to say that excessive specialisation and a failure to communicate is a consequence of the divergent "faiths" with which the Report is content, than that the contrary is the case. Motives, not word lists, are at the root of communication. The emphasis, at present directed towards shuffling the curriculum in Sixth Forms, ought to be directed towards the search for common enterprises. Without shared purposes, the attempt to improve common understanding is likely to be vain. Lacking the idea of *community*, the conservative mind fails to recognise the true consequences of its absence.

Finally, from all this confusion about fundamentals, what conclusions can be drawn? Perhaps the most important is that there is a wealth of good will to be found in unlikely places. It is for us to salute the thin man of the Report who writes, "there seems to be no social injustice in our community more loudly crying out for reform than the condition in which scores of thousands of our children are released into the labour market." At the same time we must try to prevent him having to say it all again, as now seems likely, in twenty years time. To ensure this, we need to be clear about the nature of faith, and above all to distinguish it from orthodoxy. The purpose of a faith is not to ensure that everyone thinks alike, but to provide a frame of reference in terms of which disagreement can be defined and, if possible, resolved. The function of a faith, in this case of shared assumptions about the nature of society, is to enable us to advance claims that begin "Society needs . . ." with an assurance now confined to those that begin somewhat peremptorily, "Industry requires . . ." Why should it be supposed that the one implies any greater loss of freedom than the other? Rules are what make it possible to play.

## Secondary Education: *John Dixon*

The 500-page Report is intended to consider "in relation to the changing social and industrial needs of our society, and the needs of its individual citizens, the education of boys and girls between 15 and 18".

Here you might think was an opportunity for a fundamental approach, in terms of such questions as: what forces restrict and polarise the education given to the 15–18 age-group at present? what trends do we want to see developed, and what resistances are we likely to meet? what principles govern our aims for education at this stage? Taken as a whole the Report is itself valuable as a piece of evidence; its failure to ask (rather than answer) such questions as these is a guide to the present trend of British welfare capitalism. It is kindly, complacent and rather overwhelmed. For an attempt to cut the Gordian knot in education readers must look elsewhere. The Report drifts on the current mood of optimism, but without any sense of direction. We might take it at first as a case of institutional neurosis but for the significant fact that the Chairman's children—and one wonders how many of the others'—have not been sent to the state schools anyway. Admittedly the evidence to answer our questions is scattered through the Report, but there has been little attempt to gather it together, and weigh up which were the major dominant forces.

Let us take three such factors. Full-time schooling after the age of fifteen is voluntary; therefore differences of parental wealth and security inevitably affect the chances of getting such schooling. In paragraph 18 we are told that children of professional and managerial parents can expect, in the majority of cases, to stay on till 17 at least in full-time education. The children of unskilled workers have about one chance in ten of staying on. Yet these two groups are roughly equal in numbers.

A second factor, on which the Report has very little to say, is the academic nature of full-time schooling after 15. Of the 320,000 at present in full-time education (15–19), the majority were at Grammar schools, and most of the remainder were following an exactly similar course. Their work would be almost entirely academic, geared to the syllabuses of the GCE Ordinary and Advanced Levels. How these syllabuses are related to the social and industrial needs of our society—or even the needs of its individual citizens—the Report does not say. Instead, it discusses an alternative system, which it terms "practical education"; the implications of this we shall discuss later.

The third factor, recognised again and again indirectly in the Report, is the fact that secondary education in England up to the age of 15 is segregated. Without arguing about the terms, let us sketch the results of the segregated system—for the average 15 year-old. In many schools, including the majority of

Secondary Moderns, there exist no courses for children, staying beyond 15; the only way for the pupils to obtain education 15–18 is to transfer to other schools running courses for which they are probably unprepared, (transfers are very rare) or to try to get entry to a full-time further education course. As we have seen, the main full-time courses are academic, and only a minority of children go to schools that are equipped, staffed—or intended—to prepare pupils for the academic GCE. The majority of 15 year-olds in many areas have clearly been written off as incapable of taking an academic course 11–15.

The Report accepts and endorses this attitude:

"none of the advocates of external examination for modern schools . . . contemplates their going more than one-third, or one-half at the furthest, down the scale of intellectual ability. *We should enter a vigorous protest if they did.*" (135). (Our italics.)

According to the Report, there are only "a small group" in modern schools who will develop along lines that will "properly admit of their being assessed by written examination" such as GCE (136). Yet in (107) we are presented with some interesting material which contradicts this view, on the inability to predict accurately future courses for pupils:

"Much careful research work has shown pretty clearly that a fresh classification after four years, i.e. about the age of 15, *would have redistributed between selective and non-selective schools about 14 per cent of the pupils. By the time they join up for national service this 14 per cent has become 22 per cent among Army recruits and 29 per cent among the more homogeneous group of RAF recruits.*" (Our italics.)

But there is no attack on the system that makes any selection at all necessary.

### Status of Parents

Considering how little the Report has made of these major forces it is surprising, at first, that the effect in education of the class divisions of our society comes through so strongly. The status of the parent is shown to be an *important determinant of staying on at school*. Only 8 per cent of the fathers who had themselves stayed on at school after 14 allowed their sons or daughters to leave as soon as they were legally free to do so; no less than 40 per cent kept their children at school till 18 (20). The relationship between a man's education and his occupational group is shown in Professor Glass's *Social Mobility in Britain* p. 125 *et seq.* Ability on the other hand was much *less* important as a determinant. Yet manual workers' sons made up about 40 per cent of the top 'ability group', judged by an Army survey. They made up about 70 per cent of the second 'ability group' (out of six). All but 5 per cent of those in the second group left school at the age of 15 and only 37 per cent of those in the top group stayed on.

But there are dangers in an analysis of the problems that sums everything up as class differences, i.e. as “something that one cannot change, you know”, but can handle at long range with statistical generalisations. The fact is that parental means and security, exclusively academic aims, and segregation of the majority into schools offering poorer facilities and an implied rejection from academic education, are all factors that *could* be decisively changed by a determined government. What does the Report propose about these things?—what does it fail to underline?

## Segregation

With regard to parental income, security and the size of the family, the following summary deserves quoting in full:

“With the exception of these large families, then, we can today for the first time say that the family situation of all classes is such as to put no barriers in the way of longer education. But the exception remains. In recent years, society has made some provision towards the cost of supporting a large family through family allowances, income tax allowances and, for those with really low incomes, through maintenance allowances, but the provision is hardly sufficient as yet to give equality of opportunity to members of large families.” (47).

Only a chairman of *The Economist* could speak so authoritatively on working-class budgets. The real question, of course, is what is going to be done to secure equality of opportunity?

As for our segregated system of secondary education, the Report has realised that there is a large overlap in the attainment of pupils, between Modern and Grammar schools and that this overlap has been underestimated. Its solution is the provision of ‘overlapping courses’, at least up to 16. As for alternatives to a segregated system, the Report welcomes the Comprehensive and Leicestershire schemes, but “it is too early to form any judgment on the effects of this new pattern of organisation”. “Once again we can only welcome an ingenious and interesting experiment” (39).

The impression one gains from these extracts, is that the report is generally committed to the *status quo* rather than to experiment and question. So much is obvious throughout their discussion of the Grammar schools, the Sixth form courses and the present segregated system of secondary education. But it extends beyond this. For example it is recognised in the Report that, “of all age-groups, the teenagers are most exposed to the impact of the mass media of communication”. The recommendations, however, would help to *protect* the children from these harmful forces of society—as long as is possible—not to *change* society, or enable the teacher to deal with the problems posed.

Thus, as far as an analysis of the problems is concerned, the Report offers neither a vigorous search for truth, nor a serious weighing up of the available information, and it entertains no radical solution. Perhaps radical scholarship is the last thing to expect

of an educational Report. Is it, then, careful Fabianism, a genteel bit of social engineering, or a craftier reformism that we find here? In that case, why publish to the world that, given twenty years, England expects to reach the position of the US in 1940, with 50 per cent of the 16–18 year-olds in full-time schooling or college (596)? Besides, the reforms, however gradual, must finally change some institutions. By 1980, for example, the main attraction to these teenagers must be a variety of non-‘academic courses, i.e. a curriculum introducing a wide range of subjects, all having a close connection with the outside world and probably involving a good deal of practical work (608). But: many of the Grammar schools are too small to expect adequate numbers to stay on for practical courses (610); only a relatively small number of Modern schools could hope to provide academic courses 16–18 (609); and many Modern schools are so small and ill-equipped that they could not even expect to provide a broad enough variety in the more practical courses. Thus only a large school with be able to offer the *choice of courses* that older boys and girls need (604). It follows that Comprehensive schools have a central role! The Report admits that one of their “great strengths lies in the range of options (they) can offer to 15 year-olds”. Indeed, “we welcome comprehensive schools . . . as pace-setters . . . in persuading boys and girls to stay longer at school” (616). However, the time has not yet come (if indeed it ever ought to come) *when a single national pattern can be prescribed!* (616). The facts are clear, but the Report steadfastly refuses to draw conclusions.

## Defence of Grammar Schools

The moral is fairly simple: the unswerving defence of the Grammar schools as they are. Large grammar schools *could* probably run a course that ranged beyond their present academic subjects, but in the disingenuous words of the Report, “would there be a welcome for it?” (611). In the meanwhile, Technical schools should go on as they are; in fact, more should be developed. They should attract the technically-minded Modern and Grammar pupils, and build up an extra large VI Form. Modern schools should provide academic, “practical” and technical for pupils up to the age of 16, before sending off their pupils to Grammar or Technical schools, or a newly devised Junior College. (How the Modern schools are going to be staffed, equipped and organised to do this is not indicated. At no point are these proposals seen in relation to their base in an appallingly inadequate Secondary school system). Meanwhile, in a number of defined areas Comprehensive schools can be introduced, since they make it easier to provide appropriate courses without delay or friction (624). They must not, however, “harm any existing good schools”—meaning presumably that they must be founded from bad or mediocre schools. Orders as before: no change.

However, change there must be somewhere. So let us turn to the 'new' content of education. Failing a frontal attack on the academic tradition, the method proposed here is to provide an "alternative road". "Practical education", as it is called, is roughly—education in which the purpose is clear, and which commends itself to the pupil as worthwhile; which involves doing as well as appreciating what others have done; which encourages technical inventiveness; which builds up rules from a study of examples, rather than start from the abstract rule; which may involve a non-verbal approach (569–73). This somewhat academic summing up of the modern approach to education is useful. But how is "practical education" related to the academic tradition? There is no answer, in the Report. The two alternatives seem at times to be logically exclusive: "some minds are analytical; others can only build up" (573). "Different kinds of minds must be approached in different ways" (573). "The *non-verbal mind* is . . . *not so inferior* to the academic mind as is sometimes supposed" (573)—a beauty that takes this caste system of minds about as far as it can go!

Technical schools (and the Comprehensives) are held

## Continuing Education: *John Thirlwell*

MOST CHILDREN now leave school at fifteen. This group of 400,000 children, (a total which is likely to grow as the 'bulge' streams out from the schools) is the *least educated formally* of our children, the group with greatest need for Further Education.

Most of these children come from Secondary Modern schools (in Grammar schools about 45 per cent leave when they are over sixteen) and this emphasises the existence of this important under-privileged group in the community. Since something over 200,000 children become enrolled in some form of Further Education, and many of these have to choose between evening or part-time day study, (only about 10,000 find full-time education), it becomes evident that this under-privileged group is not effectively assisted by the Further Education service. It is important to remember that, of the 11,482 children who left school in 1958 to go to University *only 13 came from Secondary Modern* schools, whilst 171,308 fifteen-year-olds and 167,675 sixteen-year-olds enrolled in evening classes. The majority of these had come from Secondary Modern schools.

The Crowther Report dealing with 'Fifteen to Eighteen' might have been expected to have regarded this problem as its first priority and in proposing an "early" increase in the school leaving age to sixteen for all children, it recognises the value of a longer period of full-time education for this large group as well. However, whilst admitting that Further Education is "neglected educational territory" it fails to find as much space to study this territory as it finds for the more familiar ground of the Sixth Form. The most able children, only a proportion of whom pass through the Sixth

to show how intellectually challenging the "practical" approach can be, at VI Form Level (580), but on the other hand the Report ends this section by urging that a new study should be made, on the syllabus and methods for a practical course and the ways of examining its results. Is not this an obvious example of the way deference to existing institutions will finally break the back of a reformer? "Practical education"—on the above definition—is desirable not merely for the "less able grammar school pupils" but for the lot. In order to justify the continuance of an exclusively academic tradition in separate schools from 11-plus, the theory must be cut to fit the institutions. Therefore the assigned "academic type of mind", the need to postpone "a wider choice of sequence in learning" till 16-plus! And if this "practical" course is a major task for English education, why postpone investigating it for three years? Why no answer at all to the questions of programme and assessment? Because fundamentally anything other than Grammar school education is a second-best, not from intellectual reasons but from pretty undisguised class assumptions, and a straightforward yielding of ground to the established order in education today.

Form to University, are a precious national resource; but those who follow 'other routes' also include many able people who are important simply as human beings. This group is worthy of very careful treatment educationally.

The Crowther Report makes a number of proposals for extending and improving further education for this group, proposals that are in general terms progressive, but are in content vague, and lack urgency. A valuable and original investigation was carried out into the very heavy failure rates in technical colleges especially in evening courses. It showed, for students undertaking a five-year course for a Higher National Certificate, that some 26 per cent achieved the Ordinary National Certificate (taken after three years) and only 9 per cent the Higher National Certificate after five years. These figures indicate the chances of a boy of fifteen being able to proceed to obtain a professional qualification by the 'alternative route'.

Where the student is able to achieve exemption from the first year, his chances perceptibly improve. Fifty-one per cent of such students achieve their Ordinary National Certificate and 26 per cent the Higher National Certificate.

However this kind of part-time study is a considerable strain upon the students, since many who succeed only do so after failing at intermediate stages. In general, about one half complete their studies in the standard time whilst the others repeat one or more of the years of the course.

Further inquiry shows that the evening student finds the course about twice as difficult to complete as the



part-time day student. And finally, it is shown that those who have taken some G.C.E. subjects before starting on further education do best at the work and that those with a special weakness in mathematics have the greatest difficulty.

Much of this is fairly obvious to people familiar with Further Education. The reform of this system with its high failure rate is more difficult to specify.

The Report makes an important recommendation which should be considered carefully. This is that technicians and craftsmen should normally receive full-time education rather than the existing part-time provision. It is very impressive to see young men beginning to understand the value of study when they have already left school and begun to work. The partnership between college and industry that produces part-time study enables the student to benefit both from academic work and practical work, linking hand and brain. This has, during the last decade, produced impressive growths in the number of students qualifying at a professional standard in engineering. Many of them become extremely good engineers. Yet this is the method which has such an excessive failure rate.

The proposed solution is to develop 'sandwich' courses on a large scale for all these students, a scheme where the student spends six months in industry and six months at college alternatively for a period of four or five years. There is long experience of the scheme in a small number of Colleges, and more recently it has been adopted as the principal method for the Diploma in Technology. It is quasi-full-time and makes a demand upon the student of loyalty to a College that has never been attempted with technician or craft students before. Its successes would depend upon support from industry and from local education authorities. The great advantage would be that there would be far more time for academic study so that both depth and breadth could be achieved. However a great extension of the Further Education service would be needed, with far more teachers and larger buildings. In many cases residential facilities would also develop, leading not only to different standards of education but also to a different approach to social relations between mature students.

## Neglect of Ordinary Child

This solution is not developed in full in the Report but only sketched. Yet it is a far more revolutionary than any in the main body of the text. Indeed it envisages some kind of 'College' education for thousands of children. In 1958 there were 313,000 persons under 21 in part-time education and many of them would be affected by the proposal. This would be a group far larger than present day University students. Before embarking upon this experiment it is important that we are sure that the method is well suited to the students, and the existing 'sandwich' courses for the Higher National Diploma should be studied.

The main criticism that teachers will make, is that

the committee believe that the colleges must be used for most of the year, since the equipment, being extremely expensive, cannot be left unused for six months of each year. A reasonable comment. But the solution, the double-banked 'sandwich course' (two successive courses in each calendar year) would upset the traditional academic year; and whilst it is conceivable that staff could work on only one bank of the sandwich and devote the other half to tutorial duties and College development, it is possible that this would be difficult to develop on a large scale *without a substantial growth in staff*. At present this scheme is being successfully worked in one College alongside more conventional full-time courses, but this has required both toleration and skill to achieve. If the development is relatively slow, the project will probably succeed but otherwise it could become an intolerable burden on teaching staff. The problem, however, remains urgent.

The other main plank in the Report is to support the establishment of the County College. The committee accepts the importance of part-time education for all children. Unfortunately they are unclear about the actual content of the education and whilst it is accepted that teachers of a different kind are required, there is no sign of where they are to be found, and how they are to be paid.

It is clear, and the Report produces new evidence in support, that there is substantial untapped ability in the community and that this ability is needed and should be developed. However the substantial proposals in the Report are concerned with the Sixth form which contains many of the children with outstanding ability, and with the development of technical education which is a national necessity.

The greatest deficiencies, however, in further education, *lie mainly in the neglect of the ordinary child*. Whilst it is intended to provide these children with part-time education in County Colleges, this is given a low priority and delayed until the late 1960's. Further, for those others who wish either to develop commercial qualifications or a general education *outside* the main stream of the Universities, there is little provision, and most of it provided in correspondence courses or in evening classes. The Report largely neglects this group, except to note, rather insensitively, that there is a need for a new type of office worker of the technician standing. There is much opposition to the development of new methods in commercial education and this has been effective in preventing the development of part-time day release for commercial students. If technical students are to be encouraged to study on a quasi-full-time basis, then a similar encouragement should be developed in commerce. Further, where adolescents wish to develop studies outside the Universities then the opportunity should exist. Many become nurses or teachers and thus achieve some vocational training, but for the majority who are unable to settle to a limited vocational training at an early age, the opportunities are very limited and significantly neglected by the Report.

# Book Reviews

*The Sleepwalkers*. Arthur Koestler. Hutchinsons. 25/-.

SUB-TITLED "A history of man's changing vision of the universe", the main part of this book is concerned with the revolution in cosmology associated mostly with the names of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Newton. In his introduction, Koestler defines his aim as being to inquire into the psychology of scientific discovery and incidentally to debunk legends attaching to it. This is needed. An honest biography of a scientist, especially one alive during the last century or so, is something almost non-existent and Koestler rightly sees that the marble pedestal approach, long abandoned in other branches of historiography, must go here too. So long as science's official histories insist on pictures of perfection, the complementary unofficial pictures of absent-minded professors, evil geniuses and cold destroyers of spiritual values, etc., must likewise persist.

Secondly, Koestler wants to inquire into the division of science and religion at what he believes to be its source in the conflict of Galileo with the Church. Thirdly, he expresses himself concerned about the cold war between the sciences and humanities.

Copernicus, in Koestler's account, appears as a reluctant dragon but an unattractive one, timid, conventional, pedantic and dull, conservative in a revolutionary age and attempting nothing outside astronomy in an age of brilliant all-rounders—an innovator in spite of himself. Koestler shows that instead of marking a break with Aristotelian physics, Copernicus' idea was a last attempt to reconcile it with the facts. Moreover, Copernicus never made any astronomical observations of his own, and performed his calculations on out-of-date observations which had, in any case, been falsified to fit the theories of other people. Koestler concludes that only an obsessively conservative mind would have bothered to attack the problem in the way that Copernicus did.

This is perhaps too severe. The most natural way of interpreting the apparent motion of the fixed stars and the sun is by the revolution of spheres around the earth. This was the basis of the Aristotelian dogma. It is then quite natural to seek to explain the motions of the planets on the basis of circular motions. Given the idea of a sun-centred universe, it would again automatically be the first thing to have been tried. Koestler throughout the book makes a great point of the complexities of Copernicus' theory, exaggerating somewhat their importance.

The longest and best part of the book concerns the lives and discoveries of Kepler, who found the elliptical form of the planetary orbits a necessary preliminary to Newton's discovery of gravitation, and Tycho Brahe, who supplied the necessary accurate observational data. The thought of such early scientists as Paracelsus, Gilbert and Descartes makes us realise "the fallacy of the belief that at some point between the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, man shook off the superstitions of medieval religion, like a puppy getting out of the water, and started on the bright new road of Science". For in these minds we find modern intuitions hopelessly mixed with mediaeval idea. In Kepler this contradiction is sharper than in anyone because of the very exactness, and exactingness, of his purely scientific achievements.

A delightful thing about Kepler is that he has left a vivid account of the progress of his work so that one is able to follow it step by step. Unlike Newton he did not knock away the scaffolding. He provides almost unique material for anyone interested in the psychology of discovery. Mr. Koestler

## Counter - Revolutions Of The Spheres

has done a magnificent job in following and setting out Kepler's amazing, agonising train of thought—how he uses erroneous data, makes mistakes in arithmetic, the mistakes cancel out, realises his errors and tries to explain why they cancelled and is again mistaken, how he draw wrong conclusions, corrects them, then later forgets what he has done and uses his earlier false ideas, and how this erratic, but still rational process is all the time mixed up with ideas and ways of thought which are fantastic in the true sense of the word.

A satisfactory feature of this section is that the life and the work are seen together as the actions and responses of a single personality. Almost always the biography of a scientist is either the story of the personal life of a man who happened to earn his living and reputation from some knack which have been sword-swallowing; or the story of a trail of discovery which is from time to time interrupted by a new appointment, a war or an expedition. Either way, science as a human creation tends to be lost sight of. That is to say, when one has described the state of a science at a particular time and its needs and means for advances in certain directions, one has by no means explained the motives and drives of the man who brought about these advances. It is a man, not a method which solves a scientific problem. Only in examining the whole of a man's life does one see what it means to create science at a particular time and place—whether this life be typical of that of his contemporaries or exceptional. This is true, however distinct the 'life' and the 'work' may seem—they must still be related through the same personality. There is no doubt of the excellent job Koestler has done here, and anyone capable of being interested by science will find it fascinating.

### Galileo's Trial

Then we come to Galileo, whose observations with the newly discovered telescope and whose propaganda did much to establish the new cosmology; and this is where the fun really begins. For the treatment of Galileo is every bit as bad as that of Kepler is good. Koestler is trying to maintain the unlikely theory that the conflict between religion and science, symbolised in the trial of Galileo, was not in any way inevitable; the whole issue has been misrepresented in picturesque legends; that there was no question of the suppression of science but the vain and arrogant Galileo provoked the whole sad business by trying to push the theologians and everybody else around. The result was "to inject a poison into the climate of our culture which is still there", namely "the greatest disaster in the history of thought", the divorce of science and religion. To maintain that a whole main intellectual trend of centuries (in the Protestant world especially!) was determined by a judicial decision of a few helpless cardinals who never even understood the issues, is distinctly eccentric. To do so, as Koestler does, without a word of explanation or justification shows, perhaps, that same contempt for the intelligence of one's contemporaries which he erroneously attributes to Galileo.

The antipathy Koestler has conceived for Galileo, who is for him the archetype of the modern scientist, has prevented his drawing a lifelike and insightful portrait of his main human subject—indeed the book often fails to show even ordinary perception, as when it fails to connect the sometimes bitter and sarcastic mood of *The Assayer* with Galileo's

illness, combined with the surrounding misunderstandings; or when it says "he knew that the threat of torture was merely a ritual formula, which could not be carried out" and leaves it at that. Mr. Koestler's Galileo is an unconvincing stage villain; vanity, vanity, vanity is the sole motive of all his actions, political or scientific. Nor does the author get inside the minds of Bellarmine and Galileo's other theological opponents as Santillana has done in his book, *The Crime of Galileo!* He seems never to overcome his surprise that they were not all ignorant fanatics. Thus he is hardly able to deal with the real issues. (Or perhaps it is because he is unwilling to face these issues that he cannot get inside the minds of his characters.)

Less forgivable than any imaginative oversights is the violent bias which Koestler has introduced into his presentation of purely factual history. Typical distortions are:—the way he tries to characterise Galileo's treatment of Kepler as shabby, omitting to mention that the former was Kepler's sponsor for the most coveted chair in Italy; the worthless evidence of foreigners he quotes on p. 373 to prove the dislike of Galileo in his native country; his deduction on p. 479 that Galileo had not read Copernicus—from a mistake in an English translation of one of Galileo's books; and the incredibly twisted argument by which he makes Galileo's *Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina* say things quite different from what it in fact says. By means of these and many more such manoeuvres he goes all out to blacken the character of Galileo.

The result is that, as history, the chapters on Galileo are valueless. It is one thing to demolish legends. But Koestler's work is likely to be the source of new, and basically anti-scientific legends. Thus already Professor Lovell has said, "it is the fashion to blame the Roman Church for this persecution of Galileo. I think, however, we should do well to remember, first, Galileo was led by his brilliant intuitive gifts to do battle with a persistence which may have been somewhat intemperate, secondly that his persecutors appear to have been victims of a muddle and intrigue quite out of keeping with the great philosophical and religious system they were intended to guard" (*The Individual and the Universe*, 1959). Koestler surprisingly rests his case against Galileo primarily on the accusation of scientific charlatanism, so far as the question of movement of the earth is concerned—that he had no proof of it and was therefore speaking out of turn in propagating it, that he tried to conceal his lack of proof by a smoke screen of verbiage and pseudo-science, and if he had offered real proof of the earth's motion the Church would have accepted it.

## Isolation of Science

Three arguments in favour of the Copernican universe which Galileo used, Koestler says are wrong. One concerning the sunspot paths, Koestler calls "a deliberate attempt to confuse and mislead" and "an imposture rare in the annals of science". However, Galileo's actual argument here is almost the exact opposite of what Koestler says it is. The astronomical arguments are termed "downright dishonest" because Galileo does not mention the complexities of the Copernican theory. Though it is too technical to be shown properly here, Koestler could not have written this if he had really understood these arguments. Briefly, the point is that Galileo does not mention the corresponding complexities of the rival Ptolemaic theory either. Amusingly enough, it would have been just like his character and methods to have avoided the complications equally in both theories, for fear that ignorant persons might have misunderstood and imagined they had an argument to attack him. Thirdly, the key theory of the tides is declared to be "completely out of keeping with his intellectual stature". But although it has long been known to be false, when it comes to refuting

it, Koestler fails miserably; which is perhaps why he is relatively lenient with Galileo here, letting him off with "unconscious self-deception". (One sees why the kind of abuse quoted in this paragraph has dropped out of scientific literature—one looks a charlie if one proves to be as mistaken as Koestler is.)

Mr. Koestler deplores the isolation of natural science from other branches of intellectual activity. Yet acceptance of this division seems to underlie many of the judgments on Galileo and is even more noticeable in his curt treatment of Bruno, whom he dismisses: "His teachings of the infinity of the universe and the plurality of inhabited worlds, his pantheism and universal ethics exerted a considerable influence on subsequent generations; but he was a poet and metaphysician, not a scientific writer, and thus does not enter into this narrative". In a book of this kind this is a serious omission. Here is a metaphysician whose thought flowed from Copernicanism, and that, as metaphysics, has rarely flowed from scientific discoveries. To admit the "earthy" nature of other heavenly bodies gives rise immediately to speculation on the multiplicity of inhabited worlds, and the vastly increased scale of the new universe is an impulse to thinking on the Infinite Universe and Worlds. Then there is the historical fact that Cardinal Bellarmine, Galileo's chief religious opponent, had been one of the Inquisitors in the trial leading to the burning alive of Bruno. Koestler claims that there is no connection between the two events. Quite apart from the implication that there is no connection between freedom of scientific thought and freedom of thought generally, it is hard to imagine that the heresies which Bruno had shown cosmological speculation could lead to were not in the front of the minds of Bellarmine and the Inquisition, and hence a major factor in the conflict between Galileo and the Church. Koestler here insists on the very division he elsewhere complains of—he tries to keep science and "culture" separate even when the connection is obvious. This helps defeat one of the main objects of the book—an assessment of the cultural effects of scientific discovery—and at the same time dodges a central issue behind the clash of Science and the Church, which *was* this cultural effect.

## Comfortable Clichés

The book ends with an epilogue summarising the state of modern physics. Much of it reminds one of those rather silly articles one comes across in establishment newspapers under such titles as *Science and Faith*. Old clichés—"the stuff of the world is mind-stuff", "matter has evaporated"—the metaphysician's way of saying that its behaviour does not correspond with one's preconceptions—are trotted out uncritically, supported by quotations from Jeans, Eddington and A. N. Whitehead. Distinguished and even great scientists, the popular and philosophical writings of these men are notorious for loose and sloppy thought. No one would deny the philosophical difficulties of modern physics. But the whole question is dealt with here so superficially and uncritically that it is hardly worth commenting on.

One may say then that the book is well worth reading, especially for the scientist, for the fascinating section on Kepler and Brahe, but for that alone. The sections on ancient cosmology and on Newton which I have not discussed, are unexceptionable, but uninspired and apparently do not take advantage of modern research on the subject. The section on Galileo, despite an impressive weight of what looks like evidence, scholarship and close argument, is distorted and unreliable as history and the same probably applies to the section on Copernicus—to an extent which it is almost impossible for anyone not an expert in this difficult branch of research to assess. As history unreliable, as science laughable, narrow in its human sympathies and naive in its interpretations, there is not much that can be

said for it unless it is that it will remain, like Jeans's writings, a comfort to religious apologists for decades. It reflects general movements of thought at the present time both in its loss of confidence in the constructive value of science by tarianism and conformism in thought in which many Christians see a religious revival.

Edward Whitehead

## Mr. Brock's Nyasaland

*Dawn in Nyasaland.* Guy Clutton-Brock. Hodder & Stoughton. 3/6.

THE OFFICIAL policy in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland is that of 'Partnership'. Apart from the fact that this is supposed to be an entirely different concept to the South African policy of apartheid, partnership has never been officially defined. As a consequence individuals are free to define the term almost as they please. Guy Clutton-Brock's definition obviously deals with people, not abstractions; it is not partnership between Africans as a group and Europeans as a group which he supports, but partnership between individuals who happen to be Africans, Europeans, or Asians. The fact that there is little need for the term 'partnership' as a political concept if this definition is used, accounts for Mr. Clutton-Brock's statement that the "alternatives are integration in a non-racial society or separation in a race conscious society. There is no middle way which has yet been tried or which appears practicable". The whole purpose of his book is to express opposition to separation, under whatever guise it masquerades, and to express "a belief in 'the common man'—that he exists, that he is more important than anything else on earth, that he is in fact the point of the whole Creation".

This attitude is fundamental to any consideration of affairs in Central Africa, and it is in the light of it that the judgements made must be viewed. Anyone who does not think that Africans are individuals—some good, some bad, but mostly a bit of each like the rest of us—will finish this book without being convinced by the case built up. Yet this book, like any other on this subject, inevitably talks of 'Africans', 'Settlers' or 'Europeans', and 'Other Races'. This is the result of history, and social, economic and political developments in the territories now encompassed within the Central African Federation. Whatever else, these three territories are race conscious, and every act of government, business or individuals is seen through a filter of racial glasses.

The book describes the background of the Nyasaland opposition to incorporation in the Federation, and the reason for this opposition. The author has visited Nyasaland on many occasions, but his residence is in Southern Rhodesia, where for many years he worked on St. Faith's Farm, putting into practice his beliefs in co-operative economic and social endeavour. These facts have led him to understand the opposition by Africans to any association with Southern Rhodesia. The book is not a diatribe against settlers—in which classification he includes himself. On the contrary, he shows deep understanding of them and their attitudes: "Those who have settled in Southern Rhodesia form a varied collection of middle class people, neither better nor worse than ordinary people anywhere . . . A new community arising in a virgin land inevitably contains all sorts of people, subject to a wide variety of temptations. They are often uncertain of themselves and of their future, and liable to react to their circumstances irrationally and inconsistently, sometimes with

generosity and commonsense, sometimes with fear and stupidity."

Mr. Clutton-Brock's understanding, however, is not one-sided, and his conclusions are well documented. He shows how the Hilton-Young and Bledisloe Commissions of 1929 and 1939 advised against any form of association which would put Southern Rhodesia in a dominant position over either or both the two Northern Protectorates. With a telling quotation he brings out their belief that federation would lead inevitably to amalgamation—for which the campaign is already starting. The widespread nature of the Africans' opposition to Federation is stressed too, both historically and at present. It is worth our being reminded of this, although now even the British Government accepts that opposition exists; it merely attributes it to lack of understanding and misinformation.

*Dawn in Nyasaland* is, however, honestly documented, so that one understands the unusual application of the term 'apartheid' to conditions in Southern Rhodesia—the Land Apportionment Act, the Native Land Husbandry Act, the Pass System, residential segregation, and so on. The implications of these are clearly brought out, as is the little known fact that when Southern Rhodesia was granted internal self-government in 1923 the country was officially free from separationist policies. The African Reserves were for the use of Africans who wished to live a tribal communal life, and the rest of the country was for anyone not doing so—regardless of race. This policy was completely reversed within seven years.

### Whose Responsibility?

The policies and attitudes of Southern Rhodesia are very important to the consideration of this question because of its dominant position in the federal system. Mr. Clutton-Brock shows how Rhodesian dominance and the concomitant European supremacy is achieved despite the official 'non-racial franchise'. He gives the number of European voters as well as the number of Africans, the General as well as the Special voters' qualifications—which is more than can be said for many official documents.

This book is not great literature; it is, however, a book of pressing importance for the coming years. The one major omission is that it makes no more than side references to the equal opposition to Federation of Northern Rhodesian Africans; but this would probably have required at least an extra 50 pages and pushed up the cost beyond its present modest 3s. 6d. The important thing is that this is an honest book, putting the position fairly, with understanding and without bitterness.

For these reasons it must be read, for the conference which will decide the future of the area takes place in 1960.

People in Britain in particular would do well to ponder over the paragraph on page 51:

"For twenty years the people of Nyasaland have been resisting invasion from the south by all possible constitutional means. They have debated in the Legislative Council, made speeches, written memoranda, sent delegations to the United Kingdom Government and the United Nations. What more could they have done? For how long is it possible for the United Kingdom Government in Westminster and the Protectorate Government in Nyasaland to remain blind to what is happening on the Continent of Africa, in Central Africa and in Nyasaland? How long can the patience of the people of Nyasaland continue? Where does the responsibility lie if it becomes exhausted and they err from the 'constitutional ways' which have proved so abortive? Who bears the blame in the sight of God if the pot boils over?"

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J. E. Walker

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J. E. Walker

# Trotsky: The Final Act

*The Prophet Unarmed: Trotsky 1921–29.* Isaac Deutscher. Oxford University Press, 1959. 38/-.

THIS is a unique work of brilliant scholarship, alive with human interest and of profound political significance. It carries forward the story of the Russian Revolution, and of Trotsky, from the moment when he descended from the armoured train as the architect of victory, to the point where he is deposited on a boat at Odessa—an unwilling and protesting exile from the first socialist state which he had helped to create and which he would never see again.

Here is no “this-side-idolatry” biography. On the contrary, Deutscher is aware of Trotsky’s many weaknesses as a political leader—his vanity, his temporising at crucial moments, his misjudgements of men, his lack of decision in the struggle against Stalin. Trotsky emerges as a credible, if not wholly sympathetic figure; human in a way Lenin is not, scholarly as Stalin never is, and with a degree of principle lacking in most of the top leadership of the revolutionary dictatorship. The pathos, or sympathetic horror, with which one apprehends the Greek progress by which the hero encompasses his own final and irrevocable doom, gives the narrative an epic quality. This biography succeeds at the highest level, as a work of art.

## Struggle In The Leadership

Paradoxically, however, this aesthetic quality is the product of a close scrutiny of the conflicting policies of the main leaders of the Revolution, and of the actions of those various characters who stood for the alternatives confronting the victorious revolutionary party in the period 1921–29. Deutscher achieves his effect by the restraint and objective commitment of his writing, and by his method of contrasting, with a minimum of explicit comment, the personalities of the main contenders for leadership of the revolutionary dictatorship. Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek are major figures portrayed in their engagement with the same forces and, at a later period, suffering the same tragic fate as the central figure, bringing about their own undoing by their tragic weakness and same lack of understanding of the powers with which they have to deal. The account of the internecine struggles within the central leadership—with Stalin using now this faction, now another, and discarding each instrument when no longer of value; master of the intrigue and the techniques of slander and vilification; using Lenin as a sacred figure and reviving the fact of pre-revolutionary disagreements between Trotsky and Lenin, Bukharin and Lenin, Radek and Lenin, Zinoviev and Lenin to question their loyalty to the Party at crucial moments of the factional struggle—is given in all necessary detail, with documentation from the Trotsky Archives, now in America. We see the *cult of personality* from the very moment of its inception—at the funeral of Lenin. The details of the inner struggles of Krupskaya, Lenin, Trotsky against the development of the Stalinist hegemony are resurrected from the limbo to which the “Stalin school of falsification” has relegated them since 1928. The political content of the struggle against Trotsky’s policies of “permanent revolution”, of “controlling the kulak”, of “primitive

Socialist accumulation”—with their subsequent regeneration and degeneration in their Stalinist anti-humanist form of “liquidation of the kulak”, of “Socialism in one country”—are dealt with in masterly form. Deutscher is uniquely equipped to rehabilitate Trotsky’s reputation as a humane, intelligent and cultured Bolshevik from the mountain of dead dogs cast on his murdered name. The Party emerges in this period as a monster to which all must be sacrificed. The all-embracing, bureaucratic, machine-minded Stalin faction, prepared to stick at nothing to gain political ascendancy, is shown in stark detail in its successful capture of the Central Committee, Politburo and other Party machinery. Here we see worked out those techniques which were used subsequently, and with nauseating fidelity to detail, by the willing dupes and accomplices of the leaderships in Communist Parties throughout the world. The techniques of lies, evasions, rigged elections, open threats of political character assassination, isolation of the individual critic by the utterly unprincipled ignoring of constitutions and customs on the part of the dominant faction, the making of pacts which are unilaterally violated, the gangster mentality whose closest parallel is *Murder Inc.*—were developed initially by Stalin in the struggle against Trotsky on the Central Committee. It is all here with chapter and verse from Trotsky’s papers now at Harvard University, from the reports of Party conferences (subsequently suppressed in some cases), from accounts published in exile by leading comrades. Deutscher is intimately acquainted with the literature—manifestos, memoirs, reports—in Russian, German, Yiddish, Polish, French and English; he knew many of the participants personally and has since consulted with large numbers of expatriate Communists about incidents in which they played leading parts. He was himself involved in factional struggles in the Polish Communist Party. Through all this he has kept an admirable sense of balance and a remarkable objectivity.

Trotsky had a wonderful power of prevision. He foresaw the development of nuclear energy. He saw earlier than anyone (1905) the need for a *proletarian* revolution in Russia which would continue the bourgeois revolution, with the proletariat assuming state power. Lenin saw this only in April 1917 when the revolution had already broken out. He foresaw the problem of “primitive socialist accumulation” in an agricultural country setting out on the road to socialism. He foresaw the whole political development under Bolshevism, in which the people were first substituted for by dictatorship of the working class; the working class by the “Party as vanguard”; the “Party as vanguard” by the leading cadres of the Party (“the General Staff of the Revolution”); the Party leadership by one man. He foresaw the development of “the cult of leadership”. He foresaw the stages by which he would be expelled, first from all leading positions in the Party, then from the Party itself, from his homeland, from life. He foresaw the way in which his erstwhile allies—Zinoviev, Kamenev, Radek—would betray him and be in turn betrayed.

## Lack of Will?

This man lacked the ruthless will to take the necessary steps to safeguard his own future. At crucial moments of the factional struggle in the Central Committee he was not even there. When he had the opportunity to defend and save himself and, at an earlier period, factions which could have served him as allies, he did not even speak up. Even when he agreed with their principles he failed to defend their right to express them: the same processes were later turned against himself. His twin errors would seem to lie in his belief in the sovereign power of human reasonableness, and a gross over-estimation of his own ability and right to survive because of his own superior reasoning powers. He emerges from the struggle against the unprincipled demonic forces of Stalinism with political honour (almost) untarnished, but

condemned to failure because of a basic lack of decision. We cannot say that his fatal mistake was a lack of faith in the masses—the history of Europe since 1917 has shown conclusively that the slogan “Revolutionaries! Put not your trust in the mass movement!” is the beginning of political wisdom. But he failed to try the only policy which *might* have succeeded: resignation from the higher Party committees, where he was bound to secrecy about his disagreements with the majority, and an appeal to the Party membership on the basis of political principle. When he did finally attempt an appeal to the people it was an abortive and ridiculous occasion with a total lack of comprehension on the part of his audience. His differences on policy were never seriously discussed outside a very narrow circle of about a dozen people. Stalin used the right wing as allies in the destruction of Trotsky, before adopting the left course which Trotsky had advocated, thus crushing the right wing and gaining supreme control. The fight in the Central Committee was carried on *around* conflicting policies rather than on the basis of a fight *between* policies rationally considered. Stalin manipulated his opponents by threats, by packing party posts with his own adherents, by packing congresses, by suppressing crucial documents (e.g. Lenin’s testament) and obtained artificial majorities in these ways. The kind of pressures he could bring to bear are shown by his threat to Krupskaya that he would appoint someone else, presumably a mistress of Lenin, as “Lenin’s widow” if she continued to support Trotsky!

## After 1917

Apart from the interest in Trotsky’s personal tragedy, the main interest of this volume lies in the complex story of the progress of the Revolution after the fighting is over. We see this progress not only in its domestic and social setting, but also in its international context. Here we have the inner history of the abortive German revolution, the reasons for the failure of the Hungarian revolution, the debacle of the first Chinese revolution, and the political disarming of the Left in the General Strike of 1926 in this country. This is the least original part of Deutscher’s narrative since the results of Stalin’s “leadership” of world revolution are already well known from accounts by the chief protagonists. The subservience of the Comintern to Stalin’s policies, and the direction of the Russian Party in international affairs in terms of “Socialism in One Country”, with the tacit writing off of the European working classes—this is clarified by Deutscher’s narrative. Stalin’s disastrous policies, coupled with Trotsky’s ineffectiveness in the Central Committee and Comintern Executive, appear as malign influences in the domestic affairs of all national Communist parties throughout this period.

## Lessons

Deutscher’s work carries certain morals for socialists in Britain, although he is not at all concerned with contemporary politics, writing as a dispassionate historian. His first volume (*The Prophet Armed: Trotsky 1879–1921*. O.U.P. 35/-) convincingly demonstrates the extreme unlikelihood of a Revolution on the Russian model in this country in any foreseeable future. The unique chaos and disruption of 1917, coupled with the Asiatic barbarism of the social and political system, are hardly to be paralleled in the past, present or future history of Britain. His second volume speaks to us of the need for a maintenance of humanist values and comradeship as the basis of any worthwhile socialist movement.

John McLeish

# Nelly and The Bitch Goddess

*The Vodi*. John Braine Eyre & Spottiswoode. 18/-.

FOR THE first hundred pages or so of *The Vodi* we are carried along by the same strengths we admired in *Room at the Top*—the regional evocations, glimpses of the industrial landscape with its back streets, cobbles, tramlines and pervasive dreariness; the humour; the refreshing frankness, especially in the treatment of sex; the rich overtones of brand names; all this in a distinctive prose which is concrete, direct, vital. And, investing everything with a deeper moral significance, is the presence, on the periphery of every scene (scuttling into the shadows just before the scene comes into focus), of the Vodi, a gang of ferrety little men, who work for Nelly, and whose job it is to reward the selfish, the brutal and the vicious, and to persecute sadistically the good, the kind and the weak. Though visually peripheral, the Vodi are structurally central. They are more than Dick Corvey’s childish fantasy whereby he evades the problem of suffering and his own responsibilities. The novel itself takes its bearings from them. What Nelly loves, ruthlessness and exploitation, we take as the novel’s negatives; and what she hates, the “look of unguarded tenderness”, the “moment of warmth”, real human contact and giving, we take as its positives.

The theme is the ‘regeneration’ of Dick Corvey, whose tuberculosis is only one symptom of his lack of the Will to Live. Life has given Dick and his family some hard knocks. He as an adult, Dick can no longer hide behind Nelly’s skirts. He must account for evil more realistically. Thus, as the ‘regeneration’ takes place, the Vodi cease to carry any weight, and soon disappear altogether. And here things begin to go wrong; as if, with the Vodi, the novel threw out the sane and healthy sense of values which they implied. It still manifests itself locally. But in terms of plot and overall moral theme, the issues which were honestly, if rather ambiguously, faced in *Room at the Top* are here evaded. The ambiguity, which *Room at the Top* could sustain, is here disabling.

The sanatorium patients are temporary fugitives from the rat-race, from the world Nelly rules. Despite the sickness and threat of death, there is a wholesomeness, warmth and humanity in their relations with each other and with the staff. In the sanatorium (the Welfare State?) the powers-that-be are on your side. Their knowledge and skill are directed to disinterested and constructive ends, to health, happiness and security. The atmosphere is friendly and co-operative. The other patients like you. The nurses are generous, and might even fall in love with you because you are a decent, sensitive, open sort of chap with nice eyes, thin as you are.

The relationship between Dick and Eve starts on these terms. It gives him the hope which is necessary for his physical recovery. But he doesn’t get the girl. She, like Joe Lampton, betrays the relationship (and her own emotions) for the sake of a more socially and economically advantageous match. She succumbs to the lure of the shoddy, materialistic Raynton world. The lesson is not lost on Dick:

“If you wanted to pasture on those magnificent shoulders and breasts and the regions southwards you had to be healthy, you had to be rich, you had to be triumphant, you had, in fact to be like Harry Thirleton.” (p. 254)

It had been the same with Lois and Tom:

“Who would she be with tonight, what gorgeous hunk of tubercule-free man, dancer and footballer and tennis-player, holder of a good job with prospects, on the point of buying a car? Or he’d actually own a car, like Tom. Triumph Razor-Edge Tom. Back-seat cuddler Tom. Successful, energetic, healthy Tom.” (p. 33)

Yet these hollow men who achieve a very superficial success in terms of business and women are the men Dick emulates when he learns to 'face the world as a man'. He has almost come round, at the end, to the point from which Joe Lampton started out. He has acquired the instincts and accepted the ethics of an acquisitive society. It is as if *Death of a Salesman* ended, not with Willy Loman's death, but with his promotion as a result of taking Uncle Ben's advice:

"He should have gone to Canada with Sam . . . Sam had gone to Canada by himself. And now Sam had a job as manager of a radio components factory at twelve thousand dollars a year, and a wife, a son, a house and a new Chevrolet." (p. 86)

One is reminded of Lawrence's comment to Forster:

"But you *did* make a nearly deadly mistake glorifying those *business* people in *Howard's End*. Business is no good."

Braine must drive Dick back into the slums of the Kasbah and the well-oiled world of the Rayton (the Opportunity State?). Stop expecting everything to be perfect. You've got to accept things as they are. Love, tenderness, pity, are luxuries you cannot afford. There is no place for the "gloriously silly romantic gesture". The world isn't run that way. "Sane people are governed by common-sense; they have to survive, they can't afford to be weak." (p. 71) So get off your back, man. Get ahead. Think big. Take risks. Face the world as a man—a business-man. If Nelly rules the world, come to terms with her, flatter her. And don't call her Nelly. Her name is Success. Her smell is irresistible, especially to women. Any woman will swop you sex for status in holy matrimony. You could afford to eat and drink yourself into corpulent senility in ten years and pay for private treatment for your ulcers. Thrombosis may get you at fifty, but you will have been among the living dead for so long that you probably won't notice the difference.

There is no suggestion that it is Dick's duty to assert his sense of life and health against Nelly's world, or that there is any possibility of changing that world by social or political activity.

Perhaps the Vodi take the hindmost. But Nelly takes the foremost to her bosom. And that might be a fate worse than failure.

Keith Sagar

## Romantic Critic

*Coleridge: Critic of Society*. John Colmer. Oxford University Press. 30/-.

IN MANY ways this is a useful book, though more so to the "student" perhaps than to "the general reader", for both of whom it is apparently intended. Much of Coleridge's work is out of print or otherwise difficult to obtain and until the re-publication of his writings (now under way) is completed, Mr. Colmer's work will be helpful for the large amount of quotation from published and unpublished Coleridge material it includes and for his extensive passages of précis. He provides information on dates of publication and the circumstances of writing of all the published books and essays on politics by Coleridge, biographical and other material, as well as some less useful comment on the historical "background" and the "climate of opinion of the age". Nine political essays from the *Morning Post* not hitherto reprinted appear in an appendix. As a work of reference and a source of material *Coleridge: Critic of Society* is excellent.

Mr. Colmer's claims for his book in the Preface are so modest as to disarm criticism to some extent, but even

within the bounds set by his modesty and intentions some rather desperate shortcomings are apparent. Some of these spring from his method of presentation, some from a naive and simplistic notion of political theory and action. I suspect that Mr. Colmer is not himself very much interested in politics, though he is clearly taken by Coleridge as man and writer, making claims for him (in the Conclusion and elsewhere) that he does not substantiate at all satisfactorily in the text. Coleridge is much over-praised today, or rather often praised for the wrong reasons, and Mr. Colmer adds modestly to the accumulating veneration.

His exhaustively detailed presentation tends to reduce everything Coleridge has to say to one level of importance. A softening of the extreme positions and contradictions in Coleridge's thinking is reinforced by Colmer's tendency to regard everything, from his radicalism to his ultra-toryism, in what he calls "proper perspective", that is to say, "against the background of his age", whereby all is seen to be understandable and excusable. ("Today Coleridge's views on the intervention of the State in the organisation of agriculture and industry must appear cautious in the extreme, but when they are seen against the background of his age, they fall into proper perspective.") The result is a text lacking in feeling for the actual moral and political conflict in Coleridge's life and writings and in his own age. In spite of some talk of "demagogues" (Thelwall, Cobbett and the like) this book is politically neutral and academically "detached" to the point where it ceases to have very much to say at all. The level of comment and discussion, in contrast to the excellent use of quotation and the analysis, is unhelpful and superficial in all except the pages on *On the Constitution of Church and State* (pp. 153-166).

There is room for much comment, for example, on the paradoxical process by which Coleridge consigns all political power in the State to those clashing "Interests" (Burgesses and Barons, land and capital) which he affirms elsewhere to be the cause of existing social misery. Coleridge's indignation at the state of the poor, the cotton workers, welders and other workers is sincere and clearly deeply felt. His account of the economic mechanism of capitalism is extraordinarily penetrating and often ahead of its time. (Read him on the boom-slump cycle in the second *Lay Sermon*.) His picture of its effects in terms of human lives and suffering and his exposure of the realities behind such words as "free labour", "operatives" (for factory workers) and "the labouring poor" are magnificent—acute, ironic, morally biting. Yet by a complicated moral and intellectual process (appearing first in *The Friend*—1809—and completed in *On the Constitution of Church and State* a few years before his death) the unmasked exploiters and oppressors are confirmed in their charge of and "responsibility" for the exploited and the oppressed. The steps by which a genuinely humane and highly intelligent man can reach the position of metaphysically and morally justifying a system whose effects he abhors are of considerable contemporary and not merely historical or academic interest. Like so many middle-class intellectual radicals, then and now, Coleridge came to hate the possibility of social change even more than he hated capitalism, with all its inhumanity and hypocrisy. Coleridge's dilemma was the dilemma of the middle-class social conscience faced, as it is also today, with the evils of a system it was not prepared to disturb. Coleridge felt the dilemma very strongly; it is at the root of almost all his political thinking. What does not emerge from Mr. Colmer's study is the *strength* of the moral and political conflict in Coleridge, a conflict that had its source in his close observation of and keen response to the major conflicts of his time.

Mr. Colmer's book brings together admirably a mass of material from many sources, more than he himself has known what to do with perhaps, which will be of use to those interested in or working in 19th century politics and history.

J. P. Mann



# First Thoughts on Dinlock

*Weekend in Dinlock.* Clancy Sigal. Seeker & Warburg. 16/-. I DON'T know Clancy Sigal personally. Perhaps if I did this review would be more sympathetic. Perhaps it would be less. I think it is a first criticism of the book that if one knew the author, one's views on it would be different. For this book is a very personal view of a mining community in Yorkshire. It can be narrowed down still further; it is a very personal view of a group of Yorkshire Colliery Face Workers, excluding their wives, who are only seen in relation to their menfolk. Dead-beats, surface workers and clerks are in the sub-world of Dinlock.

"The women, and the lives they lead, what they talk about and think about, are still an impenetrable mystery. As soon as I touch on one of the thousand rawly sensitive subjects coveted and nourished by Dinlock females Loretta clams up; when I mention, as lightly as possible, family matters, she burrows as far back into herself as politeness allows, and further questions are useless. You L.S.E. firsts in sociology, come on up here and find out what these women are thinking. Where are you?"

(This last sentence, if I can borrow a favourite trick of the author in the first half of the book and insert a long parenthesis, indicates another weakness. Sociologists, even from L.S.E., are surely interested in what people do and how they behave. It's a wise man or a psychologist who knows the thoughts that father his own actions, let alone those of the women of Dinlock).

## Documentary Novel

Further, it is a book about Yorkshire Miners not at work but at leisure. The Trade Union affairs that are described are those that happen outside the pit, not in it. The visit to the pit itself, intended to be the climax, is the weakest part of the book. It starts on a false note with a highly dramatised picture of the descent in the cage. Either Clancy Sigal is very sensitive or he picked a very bad Winding-Engineman. Hundreds of thousands of men go down in pit-cages everyday plunging down at a dizzying, terrifying pace into sheer, impossible blackness. I don't suppose many are "stricken speechless" nor do they find without their willing it that their 'head jerks up', or their 'eyes implore for the last sign of daylight'. Pit work is bad enough without this supersensitivity. The description of colliers going on shift at 5.30 as being like men full of fear long ago forgotten moving into battle also strikes me as over-imaginative. I would not expect many people going to work at that hour, even farm workers, to admire the view or to look up at the several cows in the field just outside the colliery.

The book can be described as a documentary novel. The narrator, an American Journalist, meets a miner who is also a painter in London and goes home with him for two week-ends, one in winter and one in summer. On the first week-end he meets Davie's family and friends. Apart from a fight it is free of dramatic incident. The second week-end is the crisis of Davie's life, when he is forced by friends and his wife to make the choice—artist and the freedom of London, or Collier (i.e. face worker underground) and what the narrator refers to (presumptuously?) as the prison of Dinlock. Davie chooses to stay, and apparently telepathically communicates this to the narrator, who goes back unaccompanied to a Heading in the pit he has already seen

once and comes face-to-face with Davie heaving coal. The point is made, of course, that Davie is uncertain whether the village is holding him back or whether, if he were to leave it, he would cut himself off from the working class who provide his inspiration. There is the underlying association of virility and potency with face work. The local Union leader is drawn in as a parallel, a man who gave up the chance to go ahead in the Union for fear of losing touch with the men. But these contradictions are not analysed and explored. The whole novel is too hurried for that and this is its major weakness. It is not enough in a book to report that contradictions exist. There are many of them: loyalty to the Union and unofficial strikes in defiance of it; contempt for those who have left the pit and admiration for those who get on in life; hero-worship of Union Leaders and profound distrust of their motives; nagging fear of death or disablement (p. 26) and taking accidents for granted (p. 67). All these contradictions exist. Sometimes Clancy Sigal shows he is aware that they do: sometimes he doesn't, as in the last example. But he never analyses them at all adequately.

## Observations

I don't know the Yorkshire mining areas, but sometimes I am suspicious of his powers of observation. Is going into a club as a visitor such a major operation? It isn't in South Wales. Are Yorkshire miners really so concerned with sleeping with each other's wives and fighting each other? *Coal Is Our Life* said that important interests were betting on horses, and Rugby League, two subjects not mentioned at all in this book. I have heard of cases of both adultery and fist-fighting in South Wales, but I would hardly rate either as the main out-of-working-hours amusement of the Welsh miners.

Do even artists in Yorkshire mining villages take codeine and benzedrine? Do their wives allow visitors to go into their kitchen and cook breakfast? (p. 65). Can you roam round the living room of a miner's house, especially with so many people in it? (p. 60). Do they really spend so much time discussing and reading price-lists? Can Barnsley seem so remote, and Sheffield a world away? Welsh miners go frequently to Cardiff, Swansea and even London, Paris, Edinburgh and Dublin. (Perhaps this demonstrates the superiority as a social force of Rugby Union as against Rugby League!) If they really are so parochial, how is the contradiction with their wide travels in the forces resolved? Finally (and I am really asking this time) do Yorkshire miners talk about others as being Stalinist and functionaries of King Street? It may be unfashionable, but I think spelling is important. 'Deceleration' on page 75, is forgivable. But 'Pneumoconiosis' is so important a word in the life of miners that it was worth the trouble of getting right.

## Temptations

Having said all this, I must say there are passages of good observation too. The second part is better than the first, apart from the pit visit. I particularly liked the insight into the meaning of changing alliances in the local club (pp. 98–101) but even that was allowed to peter out half-developed. The Safety Committee election too (pp. 128–131) had possibilities if it had been carried further.

Mining and miners are a terrible temptation to the writer and sociologist. D. H. Lawrence, Gwyn Thomas, Jack Jones, Emil Zola, Richard Llewellyn, A. J. Cronin, Len Doherty, come immediately to mind. *Coal Is Our Life*, and *Brynmawr* are published examples of the other stream. Dozens more lurk in typescript on the thesis shelves of University Libraries.

I suspect that the novel is the best form to use for a real description of miner's life. The problem is not to describe the romantic differences, the underground, the dramatic accidents. That is easy. The problem is to describe the same-ness and the monotony and to point to a socialist way out. To me Clancy Sigal has failed both in bringing Davie to life and in giving a picture of miners in Yorkshire. Len Doherty and Dennis, Henriques, and Slaughter have done better for Yorkshire, B. L. Coombes for Wales and Norman Harrison for Kent. I am not even sure that I have a good picture of Clancy Sigal, except that he can hold his liquor and is in a hurry. However, he has tried, and in some ways this review is like barracking Stanley Matthews from the stand. Many of us, with longer time to observe and greater knowledge of the field, might well find (if we had courage even to try) that we had written a worse book.

Ronald Frankenberg

## Class without Conflict

*Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society.* Ralf Dahrendorf.

Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959. 42/-.

THE SOCIOLOGY of class conflict is one of the most essential theoretical instruments of any socialist who is not merely a Utopian moralist. And it is essential that such a sociology should be continuously kept up to date by the revision of its central principles in the light of new empirical evidence. The weakness of much socialist thought and action today resides in the fact that either it has no theory of class, or that it rests upon a dogmatic reassertion of Marx's assessment of the class struggle, made in the middle of the nineteenth century. A book like Professor Dahrendorf's, therefore, could have been one of the profoundest importance for contemporary socialism. It is the more regrettable, then, to have to report that, after raising a great many central issues, the book peters out in a rather academic exercise in formal sociology.

Perhaps the greatest merit of Dahrendorf is the stand which he takes against the main trend of modern sociological theory. For some time this theory has been dominated by the approach called "functionalism", which was the central creed of British anthropologists like Radcliffe Brown immediately after the war, and which has been adopted by the grand theorist of American sociology, Talcott Parsons. The defect of such theories, according to Dahrendorf, is that they present an "integrationist" model of social systems, in which every activity and institution is regarded as serving the purpose of maintaining the social system in its existing state. Against this position Dahrendorf calls for the frank recognition of the element of conflict in social structure and for the development of a "conflict model" of social systems.

This plea, of course, is in the Marxist tradition, and Dahrendorf well understands the difference between a Marxian theory of class conflict and the analytically distinct question of status systems. After so much confusion of the issues by writers like Lloyd Warner in America, and a variety of empiricist sociologists in Britain, Dahrendorf's insistence on this point is most welcome. He therefore has an excellent starting point from which to review the literature on class, and to go on to elaborate his own revision of Marxist theory.

The review of the literature which is presented is extremely useful. There is not only an account of the central theses of writers like Burnham, Schumpeter and Djilas, with which

most sociologists are now familiar, but also a careful analysis of the significance for Marxists of such a deceptively simple book as Marshall's *Citizenship and Social Class*, and a summary of the views of a number of other writers not well known in this country. Especially interesting here is the work of the Soviet writers, Nemchinov and Fedoseyev, of Croner in Germany, and of Geiger in Denmark. Nemchinov is shown breaking out a little from the strait-jacket of dogma to try to formulate an adequate account of the role of "intellectuals" in Communist society, and Fedoseyev as formulating a crude theory of power-élites in corporation-dominated late capitalist societies. Croner deals extensively with the role of white collar workers and Geiger with the interesting questions of middle-class political action, and the increasing importance of workers identifying themselves as consumers rather than producers.

Out of all these issues Dahrendorf selects five for special discussion and it must be admitted that each of them is important in any attempt to bring Marx's theory up-to-date. They are (1) the separation of ownership and control; (2) the changes in skill differentiation and the effect of this on the capacity of the working class for corporate action; (3) the rise of the new middle classes; (4) the increase in social mobility, and (5) the confining of class-conflict within strict institutional boundaries, so that it does not develop into an overall revolutionary conflict.

It is at this point, however, that Dahrendorf's deficiencies and biases become most obvious. The tendency of each of these sections is to suggest, on the basis of very limited and highly selected evidence, that the actual state of affairs today is almost the exact opposite of Marx's predictions. This is not, as some might think, because Dahrendorf is a reactionary trying as hard as he can to bury Marx. It is simply because he takes a pure theoreticians' delight in asking what would happen if the variables in his theory were given different values, and then goes on to speak as though they actually have those values. Thus the existence of purely passive shareholders leads him into a discussion of a state of affairs in which there is virtually no connection between ownership and control at all. This is theoretically interesting, but, if Dahrendorf had read his *Insiders*, he would have recognised that this is a model only, and has as little connection with reality as Talcott Parsons' Utopia.

## Authority And Control

Dahrendorf's own main theses are two. The first is that class conflict centres not necessarily and only around economic interests arising from the relationship of men to the means of production, but around the question of authority; the second that conflicts about authority can go on within the framework of many institutions, but may be confined within those institutions and not connected up in an overall revolutionary struggle. Both of these theses are pressed far beyond the limits which available empirical evidence will allow, and both lead him into rather absurd theoretical positions.

There is probably some ground for suggesting that class-conflicts centre around the question of the control of authority and power. How else could the continuance of conflicts between various groups (whether we call them classes or strata) in Communist society be explained? But it is surely astonishing to see "the Speaker of Parliament, the Prime Minister and the Supreme Court Judge" mentioned as the leading representatives of the ruling class because they exercise immediate authority. Surely this blindness to the controlling influence which economic groupings exercise over political functionaries simply ignores the facts of political life. It may well be that to regard the modern state as "the executive committee of the bourgeoisie" is too crude a formulation. But it has at least as much of the truth in it as Dahrendorf's statement of the opposite extreme position.

Again, nobody who has tried to do socialist education amongst Trade Unionists would wish to deny that industrial militancy may be "institutionalised" and have no connection with a more far-reaching class struggle. But Dahrendorf once more adopts a theoretically extreme position by giving absolutely equal value to group conflict in industry and group conflict within other institutions and asserting that there may on occasions be no connection at all between them. Surely it is not by accident that conflicts in industry, in the church and the state become "superimposed". A whole tradition of sociological and historical research has been concerned precisely with the problem of exploring their inter-relationships and any sociological theory, which simply ignores this work, is mere concept-juggling.

It is difficult even for a sociologist to read the parts of this book where class conflict is discussed on a purely formal and theoretical level without annoyance. It is even more difficult for sociologists who are also socialists. It is said that, after his conversion, Kierkegaard couldn't stand theology lectures given by what he called "Professors of the Crucifixion". Sometimes Professor Dahrendorf creates a similar image of himself as a "Professor of the Class Struggle". Yet it would be a pity if our repugnance at this image were to drive us back into dogma, and prevent our exploring the real significance of the problems he suggests. Passive shareholders, bourgeoisified craftsmen, white-collar workers, purely industrial militancy, and conflicts in socialist societies do present problems of socialist theory, and the most effective criticism which could be made of Dahrendorf would be to write a better book which dealt with the problems which he raises, showing greater respect for empirical evidence.

John Rex

## Mr. Esslin's Little Brecht

*Brecht, A Choice of Evils*, Martin Esslin. Eyre & Spottiswoode. 36/-.

IT MAY seem foolhardy to criticise a book which Eric Bentley has called "the best thing that has yet been written about Brecht in any language", and Ken Tynan "a brilliantly perceptive study of the most ambiguous and perpetually fascinating figure of the 20th-century theatre". Messrs. Bentley and Tynan are, after all, men of the Left. Both knew Brecht personally; and both know as much as anybody about Brecht's significance for the modern theatre. Why, then, have they followed the 'bourgeois' critics in praising a work that, in effect, contradicts all that Brecht stood for?

The most charitable explanation, of course, is that they did it for love of Brecht, believing that any kind of publicity for Brecht and his ideas is better than none. And it should be said at once that there is a great deal in Mr. Esslin's book to which nobody could take exception. About half the book consists of biography; this is extremely interesting in itself, and is a useful supplement to Mr. Willett's largely non-biographical *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht* (Methuen, 36/-). Most of it is, inevitably, *political* biography; and there is no doubt that this part of the book will be deeply resented by Brecht's friends and pupils in East Berlin. They will take it as Cold War propaganda of the most vicious kind. Whether they will be right, I'm not sure—since I'm not sure what Mr. Esslin really intends with his many 'revelations' about Brecht's troubles with the Party. These troubles are not just a chimera of Mr. Esslin's imagination (I heard something of them myself in East Berlin). But what do they prove? If

Mr. Esslin is telling us that the Communist Parties are the modern strongholds of Philistia, do we still need to be told that? Brecht anticipated trouble in East Berlin, and got it: but he also got, what nobody in the West had offered him, a theatre of his own where he could work out his ideas. In choosing the East, Brecht would have said he was choosing the greater, because the more practical, freedom.

I don't think Mr. Esslin would deny this. And in so far as Mr. Esslin gives a detailed documentary account of what it is like to be a creative artist in a Communist society, the facts he has gathered are of enormous interest, not least to readers of *NLR*. It can hardly be a full portrait, of course, because so much of Brecht's work remains unpublished, and because to so many of Brecht's closest friends loyalty to him is still synonymous with loyalty to the Ulbricht régime. Nor is it always quite accurate. Mr. Esslin states, for instance, that Brecht is widely known in the West, and almost unknown in the East. This was perhaps true at the time of his death; but it is not true now. His plays are performed as much in East, as in West, Germany at the present time; and he is very well-known in Eastern Europe, particularly in Poland. The visit of the *Berliner Ensemble* to the Soviet Union in 1957 may not have been a great success; but Mr. Esslin does not allow for the general cultural backwardness of a country that had liquidated its most brilliant men of the theatre—Tairov, Meyerhold—20 years before. The point I am trying to make is that the reasons for official Party suspicion of Brecht may not be as political as Mr. Esslin supposes. Picasso is, after all, in a similar position.

At times, Mr. Esslin seems to be out to prove Brecht's unorthodoxy by means of his 'revelations'. The logic runs: no great artist can be a good Communist; Brecht was a great artist; therefore Brecht was not a good Communist. This kind of argument is very popular in West Germany, for obvious reasons. It enables West Germans to enjoy Brecht without feeling that they are taking part in subversive activities. But it is quite false: Brecht was a subversive. And you can't get round Brecht's Communism as easily as that. The fact that Brecht wrote—and published—squibs at the expense of the Party bureaucracy does not prove that he was not 'a good Communist'. Nor does Harich's claim (made three months *after his death*) that Brecht had been one of his supporters seem quite convincing: Brecht was a sly fox, he would hardly have committed himself if he had known how far Harich was prepared to go in his 'revisionism'. The truth is, as Mr. Esslin seems at other times ready to admit, that Brecht thought of himself as a much better Marxist than his Party critics. He claimed that his theatre was superior to Soviet theatre, because he claimed that it was more truly Marxist. This is a claim that ought to have been investigated. Mr. Esslin does not do so; and his careful (though necessarily incomplete) documentation of Brecht's political misadventures is no sort of substitute for a critical analysis of Brecht's *oeuvre* and dramatic theory.

### Which 'Real Brecht'?

So far, Mr. Esslin's book simply has the defects of any biographical approach to literary criticism: mere piling-up of biographical facts helps little, and can hinder fatally, a critical understanding of the works themselves. But I can't say that I find even Mr. Esslin's strictly *literary* criticism very satisfactory. Take, for instance, his remarks on Brecht as a 'poet': "... without the stamp of greatness impressed on them by their poetry these plays could never have exercised such an influence. They would not even have been noticed..." What does this mean? Since Brecht's greatest plays are written in prose, "poetry" must here imply some quality added to "heighten" the language, and separable from it. This would be a devastating criticism of Brecht, if it were true. And if by "poetry" Mr. Esslin means no more than 'mastery of language' (which is what he does mean, I suppose) then he is simply telling us that Brecht's plays

would not have been noticed if Brecht had not been a great writer.

But it is when Mr. Esslin attempts a systematic interpretation of the plays that I find myself disagreeing most profoundly. This occurs in the final section of the book, entitled, somewhat presumptuously: 'The Real Brecht'. A few quotations will give the general pattern of thought: "The tension between the poet's conscious aim and the subconscious, emotional content of his work of which he himself is unaware, is in Brecht's case the source of its poetic power." "... the conflict between the rational and the instinctive was itself one of the main themes of Brecht's poetic work. His very denial of the emotional factor is an indication of his constant preoccupation with this subject ... (sic!) ... the most obvious outcome of Brecht's refusal to admit the irrational was his blindness towards the real meaning and content of some of his best work ..." There we have it: Brecht was blind to the real meaning of his own work, but Mr. Esslin is here to give us the inside story. By this method, both Brecht's theories and the dictates of common sense can be safely ignored. The plays are not at all what they seem to be. *Mother Courage*, *Galileo*, *The Good Woman of Setzuan* are not 'about' War, or the conflict between New Science and Old Church, or the predicament of the good man in an evil world: they are about the eternal struggle between Reason and Instinct. Mr. Esslin claims that his interpretation actually enhances the significance of the plays: it would seem to me to diminish their significance radically, and make Brecht look a fool into the bargain. But the question is: is Mr. Esslin's interpretation right?

I think this can be put to the test quite easily. Mr. Esslin maintains that the central theme of Brecht's plays is the conflict between Reason and Instinct (or Emotion: the psychology seems a little vague). In evidence he quotes: the choice Kragler makes at the end of the early play *Drums in the Night*, the case of the merchant and the coolie in the short didactic play *The Exception and the Rule*, and the tug-of-war between the true mother and Grusha for the possession of the child in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Frankly, I can't see that the Reason-Instinct antithesis makes sense in any of the given examples. 'Kragler', in Mr. Esslin's words, 'has been pressed into the army, has been kept a prisoner in Africa, and has come back to Germany. He is faced with the decision whether to join the revolutionary Spartacists or to marry his bride ... and so settle down to a life of passive mediocrity. He too chooses to do what instinct dictates rather than what reason would have demanded ...'. What, in fact, does Kragler do? He abandons the Spartacists and goes off to his bride. But why is this a victory of Instinct (or Emotion) over Reason? Brecht portrays Kragler's response to the revolution as a very emotional affair; there is nothing reasonable about it. And why should Instinct rather than Reason dictate Kragler's decision to go with his bride (Brecht obviously implies this to be the 'reasonable',

commonsense thing to do in Kragler's situation)? *Drums in the Night* is a historical play: it is about the German Revolution of 1919, and why that revolution failed. Kragler's decision must be understood in this concrete historical context: the Reason-Instinct antithesis does not apply.

And it makes nonsense, I think, of the excellent little didactic play *The Exception and the Rule*. Is there any doubt, after all, what that play is about? It is openly didactic, and the lesson Brecht teaches is a simple one: in class-divided society man cannot act in a fully human fashion. A much-maltreated coolie offers his master a drink of water in the desert; mistaking the gesture for an attack, his master kills him. In court, the judge pronounces the merchant guilty, but argues that he will have to acquit him because he was clearly acting in self-defence. That is to say, the merchant was justified in thinking that the coolie had a grudge against him and might want to kill him; for that is the Rule in a world divided between exploiting merchants and exploited coolies, and charity is the Exception. It is possible, of course, to argue that the play is *too* simple, and to condemn Brecht for turning the theatre into a lecture-room. But is it really possible to ignore the Marxist meaning, and to call the play a study of the conflict between Reason and Emotion?

A last example: *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. Mr. Esslin tells us "... at last Brecht had found a way of portraying himself on the stage. The judge Azdak is a lecherous and immoral jester, yet, if only for the wrong reason, he does good ..." (poor B.B.!) Azdak is said to be "a battlefield of the conflict of reason and emotion". Likewise the tug-of-war between Grusha, the foster-mother, and the Princess, the child's true mother: 'In trying to prove their claim to the child they are pulling it out of the chalk circle in different directions, threatening to tear it in half, just as the conflict of reason and instinct pulls the personality in opposite directions.' And Mr. Esslin concludes "... characteristically in this late play it is emotion not reason that wins the battle". What does this mean? Why is Grusha's victory a victory for emotion? After all, Grusha, the servant girl, rescued the royal child from the burning palace. Instinct is presumably on the other side, since the Princess is the actual mother. And Brecht's own opinion is quite clear: Grusha has been of more *use* to the child in bringing it up, and has therefore earned the right to be its 'mother'. A rational solution, indeed! It is possible, perhaps, to criticise the play for its crudely utilitarian ethic. But it is possible to see the play in terms of a conflict of Reason and Emotion? If it is not, here and in the other cases, then Mr. Esslin's whole interpretation of Brecht's dramatic work seems to me to fall to the ground. Brecht is not an easy or a straight-forward writer; but his own views at least deserve to be heard. Mr. Esslin's psychological approach is both amateurish and too-clever-by-half. It is, in the last analysis, insolent to the memory of a great writer. And this concerns us; for the Left has not so many great writers that it can afford to do without

# Left Clubs

Bertolt Brecht.

## John Mander

WE FINALLY managed to get most of our 9,000 copies of the first issue distributed. It was something of a small miracle performed almost entirely by voluntary help during the last month or so. To say that we—and in particular Janet Hase—are grateful would be to commit the understatement of the year. Without a hundred willing hands, ready to address labels, type stencils, fold single copies and hike round bulk orders, this letter would still be typed on top of an imposing pile of copies. As it was, we managed to secure an ancient addressograph just in the nick of time—a primitive machine and brother to the typewriter which a salesman offered to buy off us for the Typewriter Museum—seriously! So the new subscribers are now all on stencils, as well as on duplicate cards, distributed “up and down the country” to keep them safe from inquisitive fingers. For the next five issues, all we have to do (in theory) is to turn the handle. But the response to our appeal for Subscriptions was better than we expected—about 1,500 new subscribers to date, and they are still coming in, and have to be filed and sorted, and we would still be grateful if . . . Need I go on? Perhaps it’s a messy and inefficient way to push out a new Review, but when people knock on the door and ask, “Is there anything to do this evening?” we suddenly get some sense of *why* we are doing this at all.

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Subscriptions: so far, good. This is the only stable base for the journal, and so long as we continue to draw in new readers, willing to commit themselves over six issues, we can guarantee to keep putting *NLR* out. We still, however, have (on a guess) the highest “readership” on the lowest circulation of any of the more popular, serious monthlies or bi-monthlies. Many people borrow rather than buy, and we have had several requests for extra copies from groups who want to pass the thing round. Of course, the main job is to get the journal *read and discussed*. But if you *can* manage to buy a copy for yourself, or take out a subscription, or persuade the local library or JCR or TU branch or Local Labour Party or whatever to take a copy as well—remember, it would be an enormous help to us. We have a sales chart on the wall which goes off into space after about 11,000 copies, and if we could strike *that* figure and hold it by *NLR* 3 or 4, we would be singing.

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Sales on the first issue are very encouraging: donations and Banker’s Orders are not. We are up to about £900 in donations, which is really very good going—until you think of our target, which is £2,000. We really have to get there, you know, so there’s no point holding on to your cheque book hoping we’ll shut up about it. No journal breaks even just like that: the point of a donation is that it gives us a stable foundation on which to build. It’s better in the form of a Banker’s Order—even if it’s 5s. a month. At least it’s regular, we know it’s coming (most of the time: we have had one or two funny conversations with Bank Managers) and can budget for it. And it represents a tax on yourself for something which you *want* to support. After all, most of us are paying a little something towards the Missile Programme, but we have all been a little light-hearted about making a regular contribution in some form to keeping and maintaining a socialist press. At present our Socialist Tax is worth about £300 in guarantees a year—which is about *half* the cost of printing a single issue (not counting distribution,

# Letter to Readers

postage, salaries and overheads). If ‘Tory Freedom’ is working in your part of the world just now, how about letting us in too?

Most people seemed to like the first issue. Most people seemed to have *read* the first issue—I mean, right through, picking up what they liked, and arguing through the rest: without that look of glazed embarrassment which sometimes used to meet our enquiries about *ULR* (“Oh, *that* piece. . . . Was that in the last issue? . . . !”) People seemed to find *NLR* readable, approachable: it looked as if it was meant to be read, not just dropped behind the telly. Of course, no one issue will ever be *just* as we want it, and no reader will ever be interested in every item. But one of the jobs we do have to do, if a common sense is ever to come out of the New Left, is to draw readers into fields where they are not naturally at home, and hold their interests. We should like to know whether the economists read Wesker’s play, and whether the people who like Colin MacInnes’s piece in this issue, saw the relevance of the piece on Piccadilly, or read through Chuck Taylor’s article on priorities: and that sort of question. It has to do, above all, with the development, around the *Review* of a genuinely common readership.

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No one, thank God, liked everything. But the objections and criticisms passed on were very helpful indeed, and we should welcome more of them. One or two people missed the serious, theoretical article which the *New Reasoner* did so well: but so did we, and we have taken some trouble to repair this omission in future issues. The series on *What’s Wrong With Capitalism* is one strand: our articles on different industries beginning with the Motor Industry in *NLR* 3 is another: we have been prodding several contributors to their typewriters on the whole thorny concept of Workers’ Control and Participation, and, when the lines are a little less clogged, we shall come through with some new thoughts on Imperialism. So . . .

Some readers wanted to take up points with Clancy Sigal about his *Open Letter*—and we have directed them towards Dinlock. One or two contributors wanted to quarrel with Ralph Miliband: an American friend put in a skeleton attack which might be described as “doing in Miliband”—and if he sends us the full text by next issue, we shall print it—no doubt with a withering, Robespierrean counter-offensive from the revolutionary portals of the LSE. Revan Tranter pointed out that, “If the leadership of the Party is doubtful—to use a natural term—about what we believe in, then so are the vast majority of the Labour movement, let alone the millions outside it, and our task is made no easier by the assumption that the struggle is simply one of personalities”. Miss Helen Ross objected to Paul Rose’s definition of the “socialist square”: “For me”, she wrote, “the whole range of activities are important in the struggle for a better life: nevertheless, I am a ‘square’, and resent the suggestion that this makes me less of a socialist. Must we all involve ourselves in the coffee-and-cigarette, football-and-Light-Programme culture?” Many readers seemed to feel that Ralph Samuel’s “Deference Vote” was dead right—in our view, a true and sobering judgment. Otherwise—where the hell was the potted version of *Capital*, vol. 3 (at the front), and where was the Lenin of the New Left with a 1960’s *What Is To Be Done?* (in the middle), and why not a miniature *Sight and Sound* at the back? (at the *back?*) Patience.

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Layout. The 'black line' achieved a certain spurious distinction in the weeks before Christmas, comrades falling too hastily on one side or the other of it.

The cover looked a bit tatty, and the gloss put some readers in mind of that other paperback, *The Future Labour Offers You*, so we have hastily retreated behind stiffer paper for the cover, and pray the Post Office won't notice that *NLR* is now three ounces heavier.

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We tried to formulate some serious thoughts on "tactics", and we shall come back to that in a moment. Stalwarts of the New Left now refer to "the politics of parallelism—one foot in, one foot out" (a difficult position to stand in for any length of time: try it!) as if it had acquired the status of the Iron Law of Wages. Peter Sedgwick took our remarks about "Where the candidates are good, concentrate our forces: where they are bad, tell them to bugger off" so seriously, that he produced a working model for the "Lidchester Constituency", parts of which (for lack of space) we reproduce below.

## "Lidchester Leads The Way"

"The recent tragic collision of Daimlers on M1, which sent all four of Lidchester's MP's to an untimely end, has given us the opportunity to practise the recommended policy in the forthcoming simultaneous by-elections.

"Lidchester North's industrial landscape is dominated by the great Anglo-Oil refinery (see the trenchant exposé in *The Pipeliners*, *ULR* 8). The Labour candidate in this constituency is a full-time official of the National Union of Oil Refinery Workers, Councillor Fred Bynne. Here we have a candidate eminently worthy of the New Left's support. Not only is he an Aldermaston marcher, VFS Executive member, and vehement spokesman for public ownership; he is also one of the most prominent sponsors of the NUORW's *Programme For Oil*. As Councillor Bynne remarked in the course of telling a recent strike-meeting to go back to work: "The workers of Anglo-Oil are living in fear of the demand by certain NUM officials for the re-conversion to coal of oil-fired power-stations. *Programme For Oil* safeguards their future by demanding the de-conversion to oil of all reconverted coal-fired power-stations, and a Government ban on all coal-burning domestic appliances." We are offering Councillor Bynne our unstinted aid in the hustings, and are confident that the last Labour majority of seventeen thousand will be at least maintained.

"The contest in Lidchester South is a little more complicated. There the Tory candidate is the diehard Sir Loder Bullshett, treasurer of the Parliamentary Conservative Party's Central Africa Committee. Standing for Labour is none other than Mr. Woodby Hulighan, TV commentator, Transport House official and Secretary for Colonial War in the Shadow Cabinet. Fortunately we have another candidate, endorsed unofficially by the Left Club itself. The Independent Left candidate, Josephus Tomkins (or Joe as he is affectionately known by his comrades), is Lecturer in Metaphysics at Lidchester University. His pamphlet, *A Socialist Babies Plan*, proposing the control of population by a Joint Committee of Government, TUC, and British Employers' Confederation, was widely acclaimed wherever it was understood. As Joe puts it: "Babies are one of the growing-points of tomorrow in today." Joe is a keen supporter of Free Cinema, has a splendid collection of vintage Jelly Roll discs, and practically *lives* in the Barricade, (Lidchester's Left coffee-house). His 40,000-word election address, headlined "WHY BE ALIENATED BY THE HIDDEN INSIDERS?", is worth quoting. "The blurred image of the corporate élite, buttressed by the lines of mass communication, is matched by no sustaining focus of

humanist commitment... What is more than ever necessary is an eschatological optimism, documenting the blind thrusts and shifts of the Stalemate State, carrying *within itself* the shaping ambience of community that can alone fire a concrete vision of the future in the here and now. . . . The behavioural norms projected by the faceless pressures of Denmark Street and Notting Hill *must* be confronted by the imaginative resistances of the New Left Mood." This forthright statement is followed by a double-page spread in small print showing all the 2,873 interlocking directorships of the Big Five Banks, and photographs of working-class children in slum streets. (These last, by the way, did not go down particularly well among voters, on the curious ground that they could see real working-class children in real slum streets all round them, without the intervention of visual aids).

"The mechanical difficulties of implementing the *NLR* policy, and the strains imposed upon our slender resources, are tremendous. Three separate colours of rosette, Labour, Liberal, and Independent Left, have had to be bought for our active members, who of course, must be briefed intensively so that they will not sport the wrong colours in any particular Division. Our only loudspeaker van has been ingeniously equipped with a sliding panel on each flank, so that in any given locality the name of the appropriate candidate may be displayed after the words "VOTE FOR . . .", and before the words ". . . FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY." All our helpers must be minutely conscious of the particular boundaries separating one Division from another: a vote won for Labour on the wrong side of a street would mean the squandering of Socialist energies upon a scoundrel."

PETER SEDGWICK

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But this *is* a serious point, and we are trying to draw the whole discussion—which is the liveliest one, at the moment, in the Left Clubs—into these pages in the next issue. How *do* we go from here? The New Left contains, among other contradictory strands, two distinctive elements which affect its future development: the first is the stream, flowing directly into our Clubs and discussions, of people who have a long-standing commitment to the Labour Party, who are anxious to get out and discuss politics and related subjects with others in Left Clubs, etc., but who are desperately looking for the "break-back" of New Left ideas into the main channels—the Trade Unions and the constituency parties. The second stream is composed of younger people, who are "disenchanted" with politics (they use stronger phrases), and suspicious of politicians. (Chris Farley, in his piece on *CND* in *NLR* 1 gave voice to some of these instinctive and hostile responses to the this-way-and-that manoeuvrings of the professionals and the parties). Older people regard these responses and political back-waters as anarchistic and irresponsible: the fight is in front of us, and we cannot pull back. Only too true. There is a certain reluctance to go in, once again, and bury oneself in the "inner" Party struggle, particularly if it means a life-time of resolutions which don't get beyond the General Management Committee. And yet, it is perfectly fair to say that, unless we do, we shall have entered the "American" waters of British politics—Democrats and Republicans, municipal caucuses and Trade Union leaders "sensitive to the needs of the firm", and all—as A. J. P. Taylor would say) "backwards". And surely, when Mr. Gaitskell talks about a "new-style Party" and Mr. MacMillan declares the end of the class-war, Peter Sedgwick is fighting a losing battle if he continues to argue (the *serious* point behind the "Lidchester Affair") that we *must* vote Labour because it is the only class Party we have.

The "anarchism" of young New Letters, after all, is a peculiarly "political" sort of anarchism. Their disenchantment is not with "politics", but with *this* sort of politics: not with Parliament, but with *our* sort of Parliament. (Andrew Burchardt and Eric Green, who helped to organise the Coast-To-Coast *CND* March wrote us to say

that they thought they had better have a Left Club in Sheffield, because they had gone on meeting long after the march "just because we felt we *had* to").

The real question—and the thing we tried to raise in the Editorial on *NLR* 1—was that we were now in a position where, if we *confined* ourselves to the struggle within the Party, we would be fighting on territory defined by the Croslands and Jays of this world, pushed into a defence of Clause 4 of the Constitution when the real question is "what is the case for common ownership in the 1960's" or mumbling about the pro's and con's of the Non-Nuclear Club (a proposal which never had the slightest chance of implementation anyway) while the French went on to scatter radio-active sand over Ghana, and the West Germans get their nuclear pop-guns. We have to find some way of raising the important issues, and fighting for them—if necessary, outside—not in order to cut ourselves adrift from the rank-and-file socialists in the constituency Parties, but in order to give their fight *content*, and a popular base and a movement *somewhere* in the society. The struggle for socialism *is* in a very important sense the struggle for the "soul of Labour": but, given the character of the Party and of party-politics at the moment, the struggle must be *wider* than the Party itself. What we need is the *consciousness* that the constituency worker, fighting to get the Conference floor, and the duffle-coated jazz-fan on the Aldermaston March are both *running* in the same direction. It is the mutual hostility and suspicion, on *both* sides of this fence, that we simply have to break down in the next few months. It we can do that (and the Left Clubs are one of the few places where this can be done, because they contain all sorts), the "tactics" begin to sort themselves out, the feelings of the non-party demonstrators outside of the Conference Hall find expression inside, and the "break-back" of New Left ideas into politics begins. Or, to put it another way, if we can get a decent group of young socialists started and going, it doesn't matter *for the moment* whether or not they have agreed, as Transport House has decreed, to take out Party membership in order to fight their way into the *Young Socialists*.

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For that reason, we were more pleased with the review of the first issue in *Peace News* than with establishment notices which we had. The *Guardian*, swinging round from a previous position of hostility on the tail of the Bow Group and *New Orbits*, and the *Observer* pleasantly surprised that we weren't raving lunatics—were welcome enough. But *Peace News*, engaged on the same side as we are, saw the point of, for example, the account we gave of the London Left Club's project in Notting Hill. Naturally, every Left Club has to find its way to this kind of activity itself. But it does represent, we feel, a different way of working, of building up a movement from the base in a local community, of putting our ideas on a socialist community into effect in a particular place and growing outwards from that: and we are pleased that he picked this out for comment. In much the same vein, we have had a number of interesting enquiries from friends about bringing some kind of socialist attention to the whole question of Local Government: and we are pleased to report that some especially interested people are meeting, with Harold Silver (14 Wynmore Drive, Oakes, Huddersfield), to discuss this, and hope that some material will find its way through to the *Review* in due course.

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Meanwhile, 'up and down the country' (as the phrase goes) Left Clubs and groups are springing to life. To the list of 12 established Clubs which we printed in *NLR* 1, we have to add, so far, Cardiff, Plymouth, Hemel Hempstead, Harlow, Sheffield and Nottingham. That brings the count up to 18 so far. There are Brighton, Doncaster and Harrogate to come. Will readers and others interested in making contact with Clubs in their areas, please send a card through to the

Secretaries (listed in a display ad elsewhere?) And if you have ideas for new groups (or a programme of activities already fixed, or you are needing speakers) would you write to either John Thirlwell, 40 St. Paul's Road, London, N.1, or to Simon Rosenblat, 14 Dartmouth Road, London, N.W.2? They're acting as co-ordinating secretaries for Left Clubs, and would like very much to know what plans and programmes there are.

And not just formal Clubs. The thing is actually beginning to move, and to take on variety and excitement. The Club in Hemel Hempstead—small as its meetings are—was the *only* thing going on in the centre of town the evening I went out to speak. In and around Aylesbury, in the smaller towns in Buckinghamshire, a group of readers have begun to establish links (Mrs. Fassam, Midfields Ford, Nr. Aylesbury, Bucks). As a result of launching meetings, three or four groups decided on the spot to gather together again: by now, the Colchester group are well on the way (Mary Walsh, 12 Butt Road), and there are readers groups in Putney (Kay Whannel, 1 Cambalt Road, S.W.15), Clapham (Vicky Bradley, 18 Sibella Road, London, S.W.4) and Hampstead (Malcolm MacEwen, 31 Tanza Road, N.W.3). The rather tight and concentrated pattern around the London Club is beginning to break up a bit, and those who have been until now very much on the edge of things are beginning to establish centres of their own. Woking, (Gillian Brown, 21 Ferndale Road), Croydon (J. R. Gordon, 39 Shirley Way, Croydon) and Richmond (a group of Young Co-operators here, c/o John Reekie, 31 Cole Park Road, Twickenham, Middx.), will by now have held opening sessions. In Edinburgh, the Left Club has a 'housing' project, as well as an active discussion study group on Africa: in Spen Valley, Yorkshire, Dorothy Greenald has managed to rope together a New Left "youth club": in Reigate, a Left Club is slowly emerging out of what was originally an independent Adult Education centre: in Hull, the Tribune Society and the University Socialist society have planned a *Socialist Mission To The University*—Father John Saville, Brother Peter Worsley and the Reverend Bob Dowse will 'preach'.

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As the Clubs develop, there will be more opportunities for them to draw together to discuss common political approaches and problems of organisation. They represent something like a cross-section of New Left opinion spreading out slowly across the face of the country: and if they take root in the local communities, and maintain a link through the *Review* and its associated activities, they will be in a position to undertake some of the work of basic political education and organisation which the New Left now so desperately needs. Their strength lies in the very variety of membership and experiences which they pull together.

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The second Left Clubs Conference is planned for May, somewhere in the South—but details will be in the hands of Secretaries well before that. And there are other schools and conferences being discussed. Some students associated with us are planning to take off a few days after Aldermaston for a long weekend (details from Mike Rustin, New College, Oxford): and we have in hand already, a skeleton plan for a full week's school for the New Left, late-August-early-September, probably at the Hallams in Surrey. Hold the date in mind: we feel it an urgent necessity now that Editors and contributors to the *Review* should be given a chance to develop their ideas about the New Left in detailed and leisurely discussion with the active core of people in Clubs, and we hope those people will make a real effort to be free for that week. Beginning as we did with the journals, it has been perhaps inevitable—though regrettable—that the attitude of the New Left towards many basic issues should have been developed without the to-and-fro of active discussion. But as we grow, we shall need to refresh ourselves, and develop our point of view, in precisely this way. In a

very real sense, the fight for socialism today is a fight for ideas: not abstract theories, but a more concrete and rigorous view of what capitalism is *like* and what socialism *means* in 1960. This is the tough, intellectual (how we are shy of *that* word), political fight—the clarification of ideas—which lies before us in the months ahead.

Over the last few months, we have been unearthing in the most unlikely places (Reigate!) groups of young socialists, unattached to any Party or 'tendency', anxious to make contact with the New Left. Some of these groups in London—including some individuals who are doing valuable work in youth sections—have met to discuss the future and form of a Socialist Youth Movement: they have agreed to maintain contact, and to take on some of the tasks that have to be done in connection with the South Africa Boycott and the Aldermaston March. There is a similar development in Halifax, and we should like to keep in touch with other such 'unattached' groups of young socialists wherever they are.

To most of these groups, the twisting and wreathings of the Labour Party in its proposals on a youth movement have been a pretty dismaying spectacle. The debate on this subject at Blackpool was little short of disastrous: timid where they are outraged, cautious where they are eager. Mr. Brinham (the Party's Chairman this year), who introduced the discussion on behalf of the Executive produced the most bureaucratic utterances of the whole Conference (a feat of no mean order!) How can THE YOUTH be organised—that was the question. One could see Mr. Brinham going out into by-ways and hedges with a large net, trapping the teenagers into the ranks one by one: those left behind would be slowly played into the Party by Mr. Morgan Phillips ("we want a *gay* Party") with a few snappy Adam Faith recordings. Nothing had actually been *done*, it transpired (Mr. Brinham was clear at least about *that* one).

Since then, the *Young Socialist* movement has been shaping up like a small hand on the horizon without ever seeming to get any bigger. But the more recent pronouncements—that young people will have to be members of the Party *first* in order to be *Young Socialists* is the Party equivalent of saying that, if you're prepared to sit on a stool in a lion's cage, you can see the rest of the circus *free*. No one in Transport House seems to have heard what *kind* of political music is coming out of the coffee-bars and the jazz clubs. Yet the question of the "missing generations" is a question so explosive that we had imagined that it would by this time have blown a hole right through into the secret chambers of the NEC itself. The whole political question—what is the Party saying which *touches* the life-experience, the ambitions and aspirations of young, working-class teenagers?—has been handled as an administrative matter: seen in this framework, it doesn't make any sense at all. Still, if you would like to keep in touch, if you work among young people or have a group yourself, we should like to hear from you. The man to write to is Brian Harrison, c/o 147B Kingston Mansions, Clapham Road, London, S.W.9.

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A last word about new and unfamiliar contributors in this issue. Keith Sagar teaches for the WEA; John Dixon teaches in a Comprehensive school and has been active in the National Association of Labour Teachers; Peter Newsam teaches in Oxford; John Thirlwell is a lecturer in engineering at Northampton College in London, and Chairman of our Education group; Ros Ainslie is the London representative of *Africa South* and one of the organisers of the South Africa Boycott; Ian Woolf works in the film unit for London Transport; Norm Fruchter is an American at the Shakespeare Institute in Stratford; Brian Jackson teaches and lectures in Cambridge; Edward Whitehead is a bio-chemist at University College, London;